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Infantry Training

Volume IV

TACTICS

INFANTRY SECTION LEADING AND PLATOON TACTICS

1950

This pamphlet, together with Pamphlet No. 2 (Code No. 8382)
supersedes Infantry Training, Part VIII, 1944 (Code No. 7589)

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By Command of the Army Council,

G. W. Sumner.

THE WAR OFFICE
22nd December, 1950

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INFANTRY TRAINING

VOLUME IV.—TACTICS

INFANTRY SECTION LEADING
AND PLATOON TACTICS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

SECTION 1.—AIM

This book deals with the organization and armament of the infantry platoon, its training in peace and its tactical handling in war

SECTION 2.—LEADERSHIP

1. A leader must first of all have the **confidence of his men**, and to gain this he must have confidence in himself. To have justified confidence in himself he must know his job. He must be able to make up his mind, and having done so, stick to his decision. He should keep calm. To show doubt and indecision is a sure way of shaking the confidence of his men. A stout-hearted man will always go on trying; and by doing so he will instil his own fighting spirit into his followers.

2. **Loyalty** is an essential of leadership; unless a leader is himself loyal to his superiors, he cannot expect loyal support from his subordinates.

3. Finally, he must understand **discipline**. He must command the men of his section firmly, but with common sense and fairness. He must give his orders clearly and, having given an order, must insist on its being efficiently carried out.

SECTION 3.—TACTICS

1. The section and platoon are the teams upon which, in war, the successful handling of the battalion rests. Once committed to battle, success or failure will depend largely on the initiative of junior leaders and the efficient tactical handling of their sub-units.

Minor tactics is the application of weapons and formations to the ground. Every platoon and section commander must reach a high standard in the following :—

- (a) Weapon handling.
- (b) Fieldcraft and appreciation of ground.
- (c) Selection and construction of fire positions.
- (d) Concealment and the use and construction of cover.

2. In war, platoon and section commanders have power over the lives of men. Junior leaders must make every effort to improve their military knowledge in all its aspects, and by putting that knowledge into practice, justify themselves as leaders in action.

3. Tactics are essentially common sense and officers and NCOs should regard them as such. There are certain factors which are constant. These are :—

- (a) *The aim.*—The junior leader must always have a clear picture in his mind of the aim of his commander. From this he must decide on his own immediate aim and make his plan with that aim constantly in view.
- (b) *Surprise.*—The element of surprise must never be forgotten. Junior leaders should place themselves in the enemy's position and then avoid the obvious course which the enemy would be most likely to expect. Deceiving the enemy, concealment, and speed of action all go towards achieving surprise.
- (c) *Simplicity of plan.*—A simple straightforward plan, executed with speed and determination, will always be better than a complicated one. The latter will take longer to prepare and details may be forgotten in the heat of battle.

CHAPTER II

CARE OF MEN, DISCIPLINE AND ADMINISTRATION IN THE FIELD

SECTION 4.—CARE OF MEN

1. The maintenance of discipline in the field is inextricably bound up with the care of men. The first responsibility of all commanders is the care of their men. Constant attention should be paid to the following.

2. The first thing that a junior leader must do is to get to "know" his men. He must study their characteristics. Knowledge of their individual capabilities will help the platoon commander to build up a contented team.

3. A sense of comradeship between officers, NCOs and men should be encouraged. Men should not be transferred between sections or from the platoon without good reason. If it is necessary to do so the reason should be explained. Similarly, when reinforcements arrive friends should, if possible, be posted to the same section.

4. Section commanders must ensure that fatigues are equally divided. It will be found that some men have a knack of avoiding the most arduous duties, whereas others undertake cheerfully any task given to them.

5. The platoon commander must continually look after his men's welfare and interests. He must always be ready to listen to complaints and, if justifiable, take steps to remedy them.

6. When mail is received letters should be distributed as soon as possible. Similarly, the men's letters should be censored quickly and despatched without delay.

7. The platoon commander should possess and keep up-to-date a roll book of the men in the platoon. Details of each man should include :—

- (a) Number, rank and name.
- (b) Religion.
- (c) Blood group.
- (d) Name, address and relationship of next-of-kin.
- (e) Date of birth.
- (f) Date of posting to the platoon.
- (g) Particulars of previous service.
- (h) Star grading.
- (j) Trade and specialist qualifications, if any.
- (k) Courses attended.
- (l) Class of shot.
- (m) Rate of pay.
- (n) PULHEEMS grading.
- (o) Leave.

8. There is a mistaken idea that the question of fitness of the men is the sole responsibility of the medical officer. The medical officer is an expert adviser. The care of fit men is the job of the platoon commander. He must be continually on the look out for signs of illness or strain in his men. He must insist on the highest standards of health and hygiene. Personal cleanliness is of the utmost importance. Whenever possible men should take regular baths and teeth should be cleaned daily. Dirt breeds disease.

9. All men must understand the importance of sanitation and the dangers of not maintaining the highest standards in this respect should be impressed upon them. All refuse, nightsoil, urine, empty tins and waste food must be buried or disposed of in order to prevent the breeding of flies which provide one of the greatest dangers to the health of the troops. One man of dirty habits with no regard for sanitation may be responsible for the illness of many of his comrades from such diseases as enteric, dysentery, and cholera. Lice, which may be found in blankets or picked up in old dug-outs or dirty houses, are often carriers of disease. Blankets should be aired regularly and men who become infested with lice must immediately report the fact.

10. Only water from sources passed as pure should be drunk. Sterilizing tablets or boiling should be used in all doubtful circumstances.

11. THE GOOD OFFICER OR NCO IS ALWAYS IN EVIDENCE AFTER A REALLY TIRING DAY. WHILE THE INDIFFERENT LEADER WILL PROBABLY BE BUSY SEEING TO HIS OWN COMFORT, THE GOOD LEADER WILL BE LOOKING AFTER THE COMFORT OF HIS MEN.

SECTION 5.—DISCIPLINE

1. Discipline is the backbone of the efficiency of an Army and must be founded on duty, self-control and self-respect. It fortifies the mind so that it can conquer fear and fatigue. The more serious the difficulties, the more important does it become.

2. Discipline is not something which is related to the barrack square or parade. It is a state of mind which helps the individual to do his duty as he knows it should be done, whether he is under supervision or not.

SECTION 6.—ADMINISTRATION

Care of men

1. Sound administration in the field is an essential in the maintenance of morale. It is the first duty of the platoon commander to see to the comfort of his men. In this he is assisted by the platoon sergeant and the section commanders. The platoon commander is provided with a batman to allow him as much time as possible to look after his men.

Care of arms, ammunition and equipment

2. Unflagging insistence must be made at all times on the care and maintenance of arms. Inspections of weapons and ammunition

must be carried out daily. The magazines of rifles, light automatics, and machine carbines should be emptied of ammunition when out of the line to prevent magazine springs from becoming weak. In action the platoon sergeant is responsible for maintaining the ammunition supply to the platoon.

3. The platoon sergeant in conjunction with section commanders must maintain a list of equipment in the charge of the men and of the platoon. Frequent inspections must be carried out by the platoon commander to ensure that it is correct and action taken to replace deficiencies.

Rations

4. In the field, the platoon commander is responsible for ensuring that the men's food is palatable and that it is provided regularly. In this he is assisted by the platoon sergeant. The platoon commander should personally investigate complaints made regarding the quality and quantity of the food and take action to rectify any which are justified.

5. Section commanders must see that rations are evenly distributed and that a fair portion is kept back for any man who is late for his meals owing to some duty or fatigue.

6. If the platoon is doing its own cooking in a forward area care must be taken to guard against smoke or fires disclosing the position to the enemy.

Routine

7. Whether in or out of the line a routine should be adhered to. The maintenance of a routine is important for the following reasons :—

- (a) It helps to ensure that no points of administration are overlooked.
- (b) Strictly applied it avoids unfairness and ensures that high standards are maintained.
- (c) It helps to relieve boredom, particularly during quiet periods in a defensive position.

8. Items which should be included are times for :—

- (a) Washing and shaving.
- (b) Men to report sick.
- (c) Inspection of arms and ammunition.
- (d) Inspection of equipment tools and clothing.
- (e) Foot inspection.
- (f) Meals.
- (g) Rest periods.

In forward areas inspections may have to be staggered since it will probably not be possible to release all men of the platoon at the same time. In addition, since men in forward localities will get little sleep by night, they must rest by day. Rest periods must be properly organized and every effort made to prevent interference with them.

Administration on the march

9. In spite of the fact that infantry may often be moved in mechanical transport (MT), no unit can be considered fit for war unless it can march long distances and fight when it reaches its destination. The importance of march discipline and the necessity of maintaining a high standard in all conditions must be realized by all ranks.

10. The formation to be adopted on the march will vary. Normally, when out of contact with the enemy the platoon will march in column of route. When moving in a forward area which may be subject to shell and mortar fire, sections will march in single file on either side of the road or track. This system may also be adopted on narrow roads carrying other traffic or as a means of preventing dust being raised.

11. To assist in maintaining a high standard of march discipline, the following points should be observed :—

(a) *Periodic inspection* will be made on :—

- (i) Socks :—to see that they are the right size and free from holes or badly made darns both of which cause blisters.
- (ii) Boots :—to see that they fit, are soft and in good repair. New boots should be “broken in” by wear before being used for a long march.
- (iii) Feet :—to ensure that they are hard and clean.

(b) *Immediately before a march* the platoon will be inspected to ensure that :—

- (i) Equipment is in order and fits correctly.
- (ii) Water bottles are filled.

(c) *On the line of march* :—

- (i) Men should keep in step. A steady, even pace must be maintained. Doubling to regain lost distance should be avoided.
- (ii) Men must be correctly covered off, in their ranks if marching in threes, or at the correct distances in single file.

- (iii) At the hourly halt troops will fall out on the same side of the road on which they are marching. All ranks, except those detailed as sentries, will take off the small pack, undo the belt buckle of the equipment and lie down.
- (iv) On falling in after the hourly halt, ranks will be changed, *ie*, the left-hand man of each section of threes will fall in on the right.
- (v) Indiscriminate drinking from water bottles must not be permitted. Men should only be allowed to rinse out their mouths at the hourly halt and that only on the orders of the platoon commander.
- (vi) Smoking of cigarettes must not be permitted on the line of march, but only at the hourly halts. By night, smoking should be forbidden.

(d) *After a march*

- (i) If possible, all men should be made to wash their feet, after which a foot inspection should be held. Blistered feet must receive immediate attention.
- (ii) Socks and boots should be inspected. If fresh socks are not available, the dirty ones should be changed to the opposite feet.

MT moves

12. Infantry will carry out many moves in MT, either in lorries or APCs. Bad MT march discipline can cause serious delays to a whole column and the resulting congestion may lead to heavy casualties from air attack or shelling.

13. Platoon and section commanders must be familiar with the following rules of march discipline in MT :—

- (a) *The vehicle commander* is the senior rank in the vehicle and is responsible for the conduct of its driver and occupants. He must ride in such a position that he can see out of the vehicle in every direction, including the rear. The vehicle commander must follow the route on a map. Blind following of a vehicle in front often leads to part of the column getting lost. At unexpected halts he should get out of the vehicle and move forward two vehicles to ascertain, and if possible rectify, the cause of the delay.
- (b) *The convoy density* is the interval which will be kept between vehicles. This will be laid down for each move with the aim of avoiding an undue concentration of vehicles and conversely of preventing the column from taking up too much road space. Convoy density must be maintained at all times, including halts.

- (c) *Maximum speeds* of vehicles must not be exceeded even in order to close up gaps.
- (d) *Double banking and overtaking* must not be allowed except on the orders of the military police or of officers controlling traffic. Individual vehicles which have dropped behind must wait for the column to halt before regaining their positions in the convoy.
- (e) *Halts*.—Vehicles must be parked where possible, clear of the road at halts. Whenever a vehicle halts, either single or in convoy, sentries and traffic control men must be posted. Every precaution must be taken to conceal vehicles from air observation.
- (f) *Breakdowns*.—Vehicles which break down must be parked on the verge clear of the road. If this is impossible and the breakdown is only likely to be temporary, a sentry must be posted on the opposite side of the road to act as a traffic policeman and wave on the rest of the convoy. This is particularly important at night when following vehicles may halt behind a broken-down vehicle under the impression that the whole column has stopped. If the breakdown is permanent and the vehicle blocks the road it must be pushed clear even though this may result in further damage to it.

Casualties

14. Every man should carry a first field dressing and have a knowledge of first aid. A knowledge of the application of tourniquets, splints and the treatment of shock may be helpful in saving a man's life. Wounded will be given first aid and will walk if possible or be evacuated by company stretcher bearers to the regimental aid post. In the attack or advance, wounded will be left to be collected. On no account will men fall out to assist a casualty. In the withdrawal every effort will be made to evacuate wounded before the platoon finally retires.

Casualty returns

15. A daily return of the numbers of casualties will be sent to company HQ details being notified later. All battle casualties will be recorded in a note book kept for that purpose. Details to be recorded are :—

- (a) Number, rank and name.
- (b) When and where the casualty occurred.
- (c) Number, rank and name of witnesses.
- (d) How the man was employed (attack, patrol, etc).

- (e) In what part of the body he was hit.
- (f) Whether he was killed, severely wounded, received minor injuries or is missing.

It is sometimes difficult in the case of men who are killed or missing to trace exactly what happened, but exhaustive enquiries must be made immediately among all possible witnesses.

16. The platoon commander will always write a letter to the next-of-kin of a man who is killed, seriously wounded or missing, explaining the circumstances as fully as is possible and advisable. The letters will be written at an interval after the event which will be governed by the prevailing orders and will be addressed c/o GHQ 2nd Echelon and not direct to the next of kin.

Burial of the dead

17. Dead must be collected as soon as possible, if necessary under cover of darkness. Personal effects and the red portion of the identity disc will be removed, the green portion remaining on the body. The platoon commander will make a duplicate list of personal effects retaining one copy and sending the other, together with the effects, in a sandbag to company headquarters.

18. Normally the burial of the dead will be conducted by the padre assisted by personnel of the regimental aid post. On occasion it may be necessary for the platoon commander to perform this duty. It is most important that all graves are registered and marked with temporary crosses. The registration, burial, and respect shown to enemy dead is an obligation that must be carried out. Failure to meet this obligation is the hall-mark of a bad unit.

CHAPTER III

ORGANIZATION

SECTION 7.—THE INFANTRY BATTALION

1. The chart on page 12 shows the outline organization of the battalion. It is important that every man in the platoon should understand the organization of the battalion and know what assistance can be given to the rifle companies from the platoons of the support company.

SECTION 8.—BATTALION HEADQUARTERS

The battalion headquarters contains :—

- (a) The intelligence section, which is responsible for sifting and recording information. It will often man observation posts in forward platoon areas and will need local protection.

- (b) The sniper section, which is composed of expert marksmen. They are also trained as observers.
- (c) The medical detachment under the regimental medical officer consists of 20 stretcher bearers and five corporals RAMC.

SECTION 9.—HEADQUARTER COMPANY

1. The headquarter company is responsible for the administrative echelons of the battalion and the control and maintenance of transport not allotted to rifle companies. It is organized into an *administrative platoon* in which are the quartermaster, motor transport officer and a pioneer section, and a *signal platoon* which is responsible for all wireless and line communications within the battalion, but not for rear links to brigade headquarters or supporting artillery.

2. The wireless equipment in an infantry battalion will in future consist of:—

- (a) A VHF wireless set, when developed. Level battalion/company.
- (b) The WS No. 31 manpack set. Level battalion/company.
- (c) The WS No. 88 a small manpack fixed frequency set. Level company/platoon.

SECTION 10.—THE SUPPORT COMPANY

The support company is organized into a company headquarters and four platoons:—

- (a) *The mortar platoon* consists of six 3-inch mortars. The 3-inch mortar bomb weighs 10 lb and is either high explosive or smoke. The maximum range is 2,800 yards and the minimum 500 yards.

The mortars provide a valuable element of fire support within the battalion. They constitute the principal means of providing such support under the direct control of the battalion commander.

Owing to the high trajectory of the bomb, mortar fire is particularly suitable for engaging targets in dead ground or behind high corn which cannot be reached by other means.

Often a mobile fire controller (MFC) will accompany a rifle platoon in an attack to call for fire on opportunity targets. Similarly in defence a mortar OP may be located in a platoon locality.

- (b) *The machine gun platoon.*—The medium machine gun provides the framework of the small arms fire defence of the battalion area.

The medium machine gun can fire with accuracy up to 2,000 yards and therefore beyond the effective range of the opposing rifles and light machine guns.

Being belt-fed and water-cooled, it is capable of sustained fire. So long as certain preparations have first been carried out by daylight, accurate fire can be ensured in darkness, smoke or mist, when the gun is fired on a "fixed line."

Owing to the great length of the beaten zone in proportion to its width (eg, 300 yards long by 5 yards wide at 1,000 yards range), the most effective support is obtained when fire is delivered obliquely or in enfilade.

Though direct fire is the normal and most effective method of engaging a target, machine guns are capable of firing *indirectly*, ie, when the target is not visible from the gun position.

Being on a fixed tripod mounting *overhead* fire can be employed with safety.

It is carried in the battalion universal or MMG carriers.

The carrier is lightly armoured against small arms fire. Its speed and cross-country performance enable it to cross ground swept by small arms fire without undue casualties. Its purpose is to move the weapons and their detachments to areas from which the gun can be fired on the ground.

It should only be fired from the carrier in exceptional circumstances.

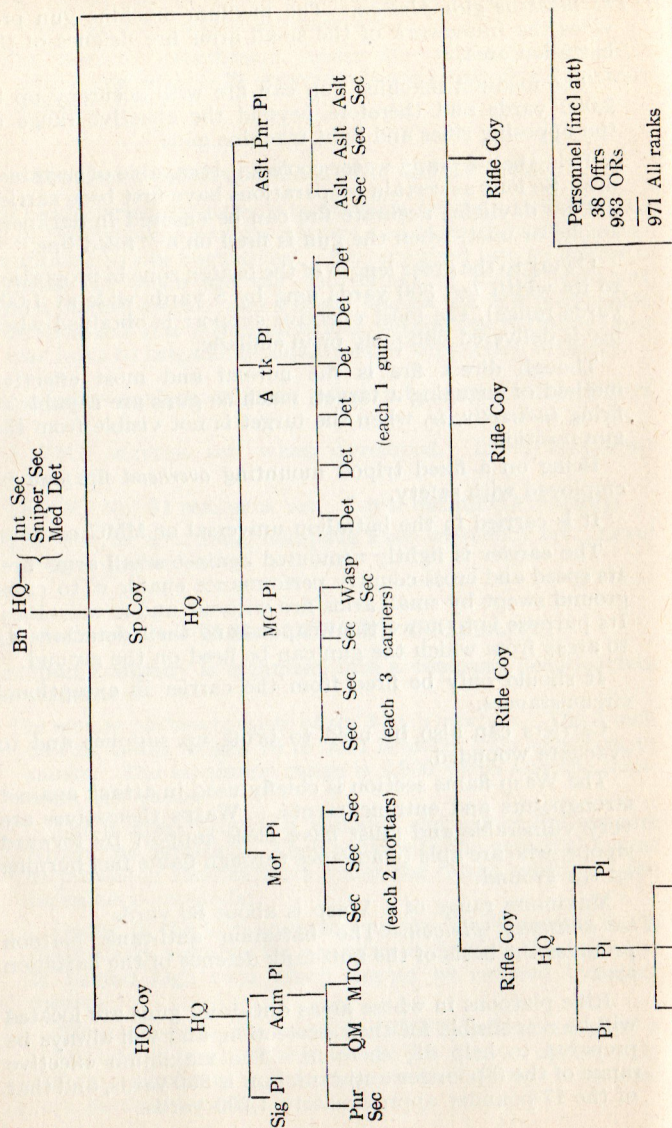
Carriers can also be used to bring up supplies and to evacuate wounded.

The Wasp flame section is chiefly used in attack against strongpoints and entrenchments. Wasps themselves are very vulnerable and must have close support by forward troops, who are able to advance through flame fuel burning on the ground.

Maximum range of a Wasp is about 80 yards.

- (c) *The anti-tank platoon.*—The battalion anti-tank platoon provides the basis of the anti-tank defence of the battalion area.

Rifle platoons in whose areas anti-tank guns are located will be responsible for their protection, and will always be prepared to help dig them in. The maximum effective range of the 6-pounder anti-tank gun is 800 yards, and that of the 17-pounder approximately 1,200 yards.



- (i) Laying and lifting anti-tank and anti-personnel mines and the removal of booby traps.
- (ii) Carrying out minor demolitions.
- (iii) Giving assistance to the rifle companies with the handling of river crossing equipment.

The pioneer section in the administrative platoon consists of skilled tradesmen such as bricklayers, carpenters and joiners who may be used for construction of command posts for battalion headquarters, shoring-up buildings, etc. Two men of this section will be trained in anti-gas duties and decontamination work.

SECTION 11.—THE RIFLE COMPANY

The rifle company consists of a company headquarters and three rifle platoons.

SECTION 12.—RIFLE PLATOON

Platoon organization

1. Each platoon consists of a platoon headquarters and three sections.

Platoon headquarters

Commander (Subaltern).

Sergeant.

2-inch mortar NCO IC.

„ „ No. 1.

„ „ No. 2.

Orderly.

Batman.

Each section

Section commander (Corporal).

Rifle group—seven riflemen.

Bren group—Second IC Section.

Bren No. 1.

Bren No. 2.

SUGGESTED ORGANIZATION WITHIN THE RIFLE PLATOON

Pl HQ	Rifle and Bayonet	Rifle Amn	Machine Carbine	Machine Carbine Magazines	Bren	Bren Magazines	Utility Pouches Sets	2-inch Mortars	2-inch Mortar Bombs (a)		Grenades		WS No. 88
									Smoke	HE	Smoke	HE	
Pl Comd	1	100									2	2	
Pl Sgt	1	100									2	2	
Mortar NCO IC	1	100							6	6	2	2	
Mortar No. 1	1	100	1	5			1	1	6	6	2	2	
Mortar No. 2	1	100					1		6	6	2	2	
Runner	1	100									2	2	
Batman	1	50									2	2	
Total HQ	5	450	1	5			3	1	18	12	6	14	1
3 sections (each)													
Rifle group													
Sec Comd	1	100	1	5		1					2	2	
7 Riflemen (each)													
Bren group													
2 IC Sec	1	50				4	1				2	2	
Bren No. 1	1	50				4	1						
Bren No. 2	1	50				4	1						
Total Section	9	800	1	5	1	19	3				4	18	
Total Platoon	32	2,850	4	20	3	57	12	1	18	12	18	68	1

(a) Signal bombs as ordered will displace smoke and HE.

- (i) The platoon commander is armed with a sten. He carries binoculars, compass, maps, a whistle, and a very pistol and cartridges or their equivalent.
- (ii) The batman carries and operates the wireless set.
- (iii) Each section commander carries a matchet, a pair of wire-cutters, a whistle and maps if available.
- (iv) Bren magazines are carried as follows:—
1 on the gun.
4 are carried each by the 2 IC section and Nos. 1 and 2 on the Bren.
The remainder are distributed amongst the riflemen of the section.
Each magazine holds 28 rounds .303-inch ammunition.
- (v) Every man will carry a pick, or shovel, or entrenching tool.
- (vi) One or more anti-tank weapons may be allotted to the platoon; each weapon requires a No. 1 and No. 2 who, between them, will carry the weapon and bombs.
- (vii) Every man in the platoon can carry a sandbag in his small pack.
- (viii) In addition, two section anti-tank grenade launchers, with grenades as ordered, will be carried within the section.



FIG 1.—The rifleman—equipment



FIG 2.—No. 1 Bren gunner—equipment

NOTE: The pick/shovel can be carried outside the pack, suspended by a cross bar between the outer straps.

SECTION 13.—CHARACTERISTICS OF PLATOON WEAPONS

Rifle

1. The rifle is the most accurate killing weapon in the platoon. It is sighted to 1,000 yards. Its most effective range is 300 yards. With the bayonet attached it is a good weapon for hand-to-hand fighting.

The light machine gun

2. The light machine gun can deliver a volume of accurate fire with the employment of few men, normally one man to fire and one to assist in ammunition supply. Can be used to fire single shots, and when automatic should be fired in short bursts to ensure accuracy. Effective range—600 yards.

2-inch mortar

3. The 2-inch mortar is the platoon commander's reserve of fire and is a most important weapon of the platoon. It emits a puff of smoke with every bomb fired and is therefore difficult to conceal. Sometimes it will be necessary to fire the 2-inch mortar from a position in the open to produce, for example, a quick smoke screen. Whenever possible, however, the mortar should be fired from a carefully concealed position from bullet-proof cover, the cover being sufficient to give concealment both to the firer and to the smoke from the barrel.

Machine carbine

4. A very light automatic for close range work up to 100 yards.

3.5 inch Rocket Launcher

5. This is the platoon anti-tank weapon. The maximum effective range against a moving target is 150 yards. It can engage a stationary target up to 200 yards and an area target up to approximately 900 yards. It is also effective against gun emplacements and houses prepared for defence. It normally requires two men to handle it. There are three rocket launchers in the rifle company.

Grenades

6. High explosive, No. 36 (Mills). Can be thrown 20 to 30 yards. The No. 70 grenade (HE), No. 80 (Smoke) and No. 75 (anti-tank) grenades will also be carried as ordered. The section anti-tank weapon is a powerful and accurate grenade fired from a launcher on a rifle. It is accurate up to 75 yards. There are two launchers per section.

CHAPTER IV

SUPPORTING ARMS

SECTION 14.—GENERAL

1. Battles are won by the successful co-operation of all arms. For example, although armour and artillery cannot seize and hold ground but depend on infantry to do so, infantry will often be unable to reach their objectives without assistance from artillery, armour and engineers.

2. It is not the purpose of this book to give the details of the characteristics of all other arms and of the other fighting services. The supporting arms considered are those with whom the platoon and section will normally have direct personal contact in battle. These are units of :—

- (a) Royal Armoured Corps.
- (b) Royal Artillery.
- (c) Royal Engineers.

SECTION 15.—ROYAL ARMoured CORPS

General

1. The two units of the Royal Armoured Corps with which the platoon will be most involved in battle are :—

- (a) The Armoured Regiment.
- (b) The Armoured Transport Regiment.

The Armoured Regiment

2. The Armoured Regiment is composed of three fighting squadrons, each of four troops of four tanks. There are four tanks in each squadron headquarters.

Characteristics of the Tank

3. Whenever the country is suitable, the infantry will be supported by tanks, and personal contact on all levels must be very close. It is therefore of particular importance that the infantryman should know his opposite number in the tank, realize what support he can expect and understand the limitations of armoured fighting vehicles (AFVs). Some of the main characteristics of the tank are summarized below :—

(a) *Fire power.* The armament normally consists of :—

- (i) A gun (main armament) mounted in a turret with all-round traverse capable of engaging hostile armour at about 1,500 yards with AP shot and targets up to 7,000 yards with HE.

- (ii) A machine gun (secondary armament) mounted in the turret.

The effective range of this gun is 1,200 yards.

(b) *Mobility.*—The tank can move at reasonable speed across country. Limitations to movement are :—

- (i) Streams or artificial ditches more than 8 feet wide, or a vertical step of more than 3 feet.
- (ii) Marshes.
- (iii) Rocky ground or ground with tree stumps more than 1 foot 8 inches in height.
- (iv) Steep and slippery slopes.
- (v) Thick woods.
- (vi) Anti-tank minefields.

(c) *Visibility.*—When “closed down” visibility is limited and the crew often have difficulty in locating hostile positions. This factor also handicaps the tank in fog, smoke and darkness.

(d) *Protection.*—The armour protects the crew from small arms fire, shell and mortar splinters.

(e) *Size.*—The tank is large and concealment therefore difficult. It usually takes cover from anti-tank gun fire by endeavouring to fire from “hull-down” positions, that is to say when only the turret is exposed to view from its target.

Tank support

4. Tank support for the infantry will normally take the following forms :—

- (a) In the attack, close support to help infantry forward and to neutralize enemy counter-attacks.
- (b) During re-organization, protection against enemy counter-attacks.
- (c) In defence, support for counter-attacks and, possibly, defensive fire from “hull-down” positions.

5. A further use of tanks is to carry forward the infantry. One troop of tanks can lift one platoon, tactically loaded, but up to 15 men can travel on one tank. Although this is an excellent means of increasing mobility, it suffers from a serious disadvantage in that tanks will always tend to draw fire. Tanks must therefore only be used as a means of transport up to the battle, and infantry must dismount before the tanks come under enemy observation. Infantry will never travel on the leading troop(s) of tanks.


Infantry assistance to tanks


6. Infantry are responsible for the protection of tanks from close range anti-tank weapons, particularly in close country and built-up areas where, owing to their lack of visibility, tanks are very vulnerable to this form of attack.


Recognition


7. In order to enable infantry to recognize the tanks with whom they are co-operating, the following standard signs are used throughout the Royal Armoured Corps :—

(a) *Tactical signs to denote squadrons.*—These are painted on the side of the turret and are :—

(i)  Regimental Headquarters.

(ii)  A Squadron.

(iii)  B Squadron.

(iv)  C Squadron.


(b) *Names (or the WD number)* which are painted either on the side of the hull or the turret. For example :—


Blue Peter

or

M4175815

(c) *The wireless code sign affix* which is either painted within the tactical sign or on the back of the turret. For example :

 No. 1 Troop leader "A" Squadron.

 No. 3 Troop Corporal "C" Squadron.

8. Other methods of recognition vary between units and formations—for instance, the aerial of the troop leader's tank is sometimes painted white.

Intercommunication

9. Sound communication between tanks and infantry is of vital importance. The main means of communication are :—

- (a) *Direct speech.*—If the infantry are close to the tank, the infantry commander can speak to the tank commander either by personal contact, by getting up on the tank, or by means of the tank telephone. If separated from the tank, wireless must be used, but a quick method of indicating targets known to both tanks and infantry is essential.
- (b) *Wireless.*—Every tank has a wireless set which can work to the platoon commander's No. 88 manpack set.
- (c) *Tank telephone.*—There is a telephone on the rear of the tank which enables any infantryman to speak to the tank commander in his tank.
- (d) *Visual signals.*—Tracer ammunition, very lights, coloured smoke and parachute flares from 2-inch mortars can be used by infantry to indicate targets to the tanks.

The Divisional Regiment RAC

10. The main anti-tank defence layout of the division is based on the tanks of the divisional regiment RAC who are equipped with a heavy tank mounting a heavy anti-tank and pill-box busting gun.

The Armoured Transport Regiment

11. The Armoured Transport Regiment is equipped with armoured personnel carriers (APCs) for carrying infantry across bullet-swept ground. One APC can carry one section. Infantry cannot fight from an APC and are very vulnerable when dismounting.

SECTION 16.—ROYAL ARTILLERY

General

1. Artillery can fire high explosive (HE) or smoke shells at ranges much greater than those of infantry weapons. The bulk of the artillery support for the infantry will come from field artillery.

The Field Regiment

2. Within the infantry division there are three field regiments. A field regiment consists of three batteries each of two troops of four 25-pounder guns. This weapon fires HE (including air burst) and smoke shell up to a maximum range of 13,400 yards in the case of HE and 10,800 yards in the case of smoke. Normally each field regiment is affiliated to an infantry brigade and its batteries to the battalions of that brigade.

Control

3. The fire of the artillery is usually controlled by a forward observation officer (FOO) from an observation post (OP). The FOO has his own armoured vehicle, which is in touch with the gun-position by wireless, and which he can use as a mobile OP. When static, the FOO uses line telephone for communications. In attack the FOO will often accompany a platoon, and in defence may establish his OP in a platoon locality.

4. Every infantry officer and NCO should know how to control artillery fire so that he can take over temporarily if an FOO is killed or wounded, or becomes separated from the infantry for any reason.

Artillery support

5. In the attack the main role of the artillery is to give covering fire to the infantry by bombarding the enemy with HE shells and by screening our troops from the enemy by means of smoke.

6. In defence, artillery fire is designed to kill the attackers, break up their formation and halt their advance. The greater range of artillery enables it to bring down fire on areas which cannot be reached by infantry weapons. *Defensive fire* (DF) tasks are always arranged in the defence. They consist of a series of pre-arranged fire tasks, each being given a number, on any of which fire can be brought down at short notice. DF tasks are particularly valuable for breaking up enemy attacks at night. The most important of these tasks on a battalion front is known as the *SOS task*. This can be engaged with the minimum of delay, the guns being laid on it when not firing at other targets.

7. Artillery are also used in "counter-bombardment" roles to engage enemy artillery and mortars. To assist in this, it is most important that platoon and section commanders keep constantly on the alert to pass back by means of shelling reports (SHELREPS), and mortar reports (MORTREPS), all information about enemy shelling and mortaring activity.

Other units

8. Other units included in the artillery of an infantry division are :—

- (a) *Heavy mortars*.—The weapon is at present a 4.2-inch mortar and is similar to the 3-inch mortar. It fires a heavier bomb and has a range of from 1,000 to 4,000 yards. It has a safety zone of 400 yards. It has a considerable lethal and moral effect, though it cannot put down supporting fire close to our own troops.

- (b) *Light anti-aircraft guns*.—These guns are normally deployed to protect vulnerable points such as bridges, gaps in minefields, headquarters and maintenance areas. They can also be employed to give direction to advancing troops by night by firing tracer.
- (c) *A locating battery*.—Its function is to locate hostile guns and mortars by means of special equipment. Its posts will often operate in platoon localities and must be given every assistance.
- (d) *Air OPs*.—These are light aircraft piloted by artillery officers who act as FOOs and control the guns from the air.

SECTION 17.—ROYAL ENGINEERS

Organization

1. Each division contains a field engineer regiment, RE which consists of three field squadrons, each of three troops; and a field park squadron which handles all engineer stores and plant required by the division.

The regiment is fully motorized and contains a proportion of armoured scout cars and carriers to enable small parties of engineers to accompany bodies of other arms moving in armoured carriers, or for reconnaissance parties to move about in forward areas.

Communications within the regiment are by wireless down to the level of troop commander, and in addition all reconnaissance and liaison officers have wireless sets in their vehicles.

Engineer tasks

- 2. (a) The task of the engineers, briefly, is to help our own troops to move and live, while making it difficult for the enemy to do so. They carry out the first part of this task by building roads and bridges, manning rafts and power driven boats in river crossings, repairing demolitions, removing road blocks, and lifting mines and booby traps. They also help with the heavier types of field defences, and erect and operate the water points from which unit water carts draw.
- (b) The work of obstructing the enemy is almost exactly the opposite, and the field engineer regiment can be employed on laying all kinds of mines, demolishing bridges, destroying roads and railways, making road blocks and improving natural obstacles.
- (c) There are also engineers who do their work in special tanks. These are called assault engineers and their tanks are equipped with various devices to enable them to make crossings over ditches, streams and minefields, and to destroy strong enemy defences, all under fire. The unit is called the Assault Regiment, Royal Engineers.

Co-operation

3. There are usually more requests for engineer work than there are engineers to do it, and so the field engineer regiment normally works under the direct control of its commanding officer. However, for special tasks it may detach squadrons or even troops.

Whichever way the field engineer regiment is employed there will always be parties of engineers working in the forward areas and any platoon, in whose vicinity one happens to be, should make contact with it, since it may be possible for each to assist the other, even if only for an exchange of information.

In particular Royal Engineer reconnaissance parties will approach forward units in the search for technical information, such as the state of roads and bridges, types of mines encountered, width of streams and canals, and the location of any local engineer material. Any information on these subjects whether already reported or not, will be of the greatest value to the engineers.

CHAPTER V

INFORMATION—MESSAGE—SECURITY

SECTION 18.—INFORMATION

General

1. The information at his disposal is the basis of any plan made by a commander in the field; the more accurate and complete the information the more likely will the plan succeed. Forward troops in battle act as the eyes of the commander and must inform him of the situation by frequent messages and reports.

2. It is often difficult for platoon and section commanders who are in close contact with the enemy to find time to send back reports, but *time must be made*, as without information superior commanders are helpless.

Information required

3. In battle the information required by a commander falls under three main headings and can usually be provided by giving the answers to the following questions :—

(a) *The enemy*—

(i) Where are they ?

(ii) In what strength : AFVs ? Artillery ? Infantry ? MT ?

(iii) What are they doing ?

(iv) What are their losses in men, equipment and MT (rough estimate) and in AFVs (exact) ?

(b) *Our troops*—

(i) Where are they ?

(ii) What are their intentions ?

(iii) What troops are on our flanks ? What are they doing ?

(iv) What are our losses in men and equipment ?

(c) *Ground*—

(i) What is the lie of the country ?

(ii) What obstacles, natural or artificial, are there ?

(iii) How can they be crossed ?

(iv) What are the conditions of the roads and tracks ?

4. It will not, of course, be possible always to give the answers to every question, particularly regarding the enemy, but they are questions which platoon and section commanders must continually ask themselves. *Negative information*, *ie*, about the absence of the enemy from a given area is always of great value.

5. No single item of information can be regarded as too trivial to deserve to be reported ; it may fill an important gap. Accuracy is essential and a report must state what the observer has actually seen and not what he thinks he may have seen. Similarly, vague information is of little use. " Enemy tanks on my front " may mean " Fifty enemy tanks advancing " or " Two enemy tanks stationary."

6. In all reports the following points must be included :—

(a) *The time of the event*.—There will always be a delay between the time of the event and the time at which the information is received at battalion or higher HQ.

(b) *The source of information*.—Reports received from civilians or even in some cases from other troops may be unreliable.

(c) *The place at which the event happened*—*eg*, a map reference. A report from a platoon referring to " our front " will mean little at brigade HQ.

7. In addition to sending back information it should also be passed to troops on the flanks and the men of the section and platoon must be kept informed of the progress of the battle on their own and, if possible, on other fronts.

SECTION 19.—PRISONERS OF WAR

8. Prisoners of war form one of the most valuable sources of information to higher commanders. Their examination is the business of intelligence staffs and so far as the platoon and section are concerned, prisoners should be sent back under escort to company

HQ as soon as possible after capture, since the more quickly information is extracted from them, the more quickly can it be used to help the captors.

9. Points to which particular attention must be paid by forward troops immediately on the capture of prisoners are :—

- (a) *Disarming*.—Prisoners must be disarmed completely and steps taken to prevent the destruction of equipment.
- (b) *Segregation*.—Officers, NCOs and men must be separated from each other. Talking must be forbidden. Prisoners must *never* be left unguarded.
- (c) *Searching*.—Prisoners must be searched thoroughly for documents, maps, etc. which must be removed to prevent their destruction. The removal of identity tokens, badges of rank, decorations and articles of value will not be permitted, nor may money be taken from them except on the orders of an officer when the amount must be properly recorded and a receipt given.

10. If possible walking wounded should be used as escorts. The strength of the escort should be approximately one to every 10 prisoners. The escort should take with them :—

- (a) All documents and maps removed from the prisoners.
- (b) A report on when, where and how the prisoners were captured.

SECTION 20.—MESSAGES AND REPORTS

Verbal reports

1. In battle the section commander will, whenever possible, pass information to his platoon commander personally by a verbal report. The advantages of a verbal report are that it cannot be intercepted by the enemy and cannot be misunderstood by the recipient, since the NCO making the report can answer any queries and point out details on the ground or on a map.

2. A verbal report must be short and clear. Therefore the section commander must :—

- (a) Think out beforehand what must be reported.
- (b) If there is time, write notes, so that no important item is forgotten.

3. A report should be spoken clearly and without hesitation. No one can make a report when flustered or out of breath and the officer or senior NCO to whom it is to be made will always allow the bearer of the report or message time to recover his breath and think out what he has got to say.

Reports by RT and telephone

4. Whenever practicable, a platoon commander should also make verbal reports in person to his company commander. Owing to the distances involved, however, this is not always possible, and reports will often be made on wireless or telephone. Section commanders too may also be required to report by this means. In making reports by wireless or telephone the same rules of brevity and clarity apply as for verbal reports (*see* para 2 above).

5. Provided the proper rules of security are observed, a normal conversation can be carried on by telephone. Talking on the wireless, however, is quite different. Officers and NCOs need constant practice before their transmissions can be safe or successful. Only practice can accustom them to :—

- (a) Distinguishing words through atmospheric interference (crackling and rushing noises) and interference from other stations.
- (b) The fact that it is not possible to break in on the remarks of the person with whom one is conversing (that is, to speak when the set is at "receive" or to receive anything when the set is at "send").
- (c) The particular manner of speaking (enunciation, pronunciation, etc) essential in RT.
- (d) Framing what one has to say so that as little information as possible is given to the enemy (*see* Sec 21).

Full details of RT procedure are contained in Signal Training (All Arms) Pamphlet No. 7, 1945.

Written messages

6. In many circumstances officers and NCOs will not be able to make verbal reports either personally or by telephone or RT, and written messages will have to be sent instead. A written message should be :—

- (a) *Brief*.—The shorter the message the better, so abbreviations are used and unnecessary words cut out.
- (b) *Clear*.—There must be no doubt about the meaning of the message and if necessary brevity must be sacrificed for clarity. Handwriting must be legible.
- (c) *Accurate*.—Such details as map references, figures, dates and times must be checked before the message is sent.

7. If no message form (AF C 2136) is available, messages may be written on any paper. The following form should be followed in writing a message :—

From 6 Sec	Date—Time of Origin 071530
(Note (a))	(Note (b))
To 5 Pl	
(Note (a))	

Have reached BLACK KNOLL. NO enemy in sight.
T. Atkins Cpl (Note (c))

Notes.—(a) After the word "From", the *unit* (in this case No. 6 Section) will be written and not the name of a person. Similarly the message is addressed to a *unit* and not to a person.

(b) After "Date—Time of Origin" should be inserted six figures, the first two for the date of the month and the last four for the time. If the date of the month is the 9th or earlier, an "O" is inserted before the figure.

(c) The message should be signed by the sender with name and rank only.

Instructions for compiling messages

8. Block capitals will be used for all place names and map references should be given if possible. When describing a position, the four cardinal points of the compass will be written in full, *eg*, SOUTH of ALDERSHOT. Intermediate points may be abbreviated, *eg*, SW of ALDERSHOT, NOT South West of ALDERSHOT. When indicating a position with reference to a letter which appears in a place name on the maps the following method will be used :—

SW of S in ALDERSHOT

When there are two similar letters in the name, the letter to which reference is made should be specified and underlined, *eg*, South of the first A in CAESARS CAMP. Personal names, regimental names and the word NOT will also be written in capitals.

9. The 24-hour clock system will be used when describing times, *eg*,

1200 hrs	...	Noon
0900 hrs	...	9 am
2130 hrs	...	9.30 pm
0130 hrs	...	1.30 am

10. The above instructions have been compiled as the result of considerable experience with the aim of making messages as short as possible and at the same time eliminating the chances of a misunderstanding. A NCO should not hesitate to send a message

if he is not certain about its form, correct abbreviations, etc. It is the contents of the message which count, and it is vital that higher commanders are kept continually informed of the progress of the battle.

Verbal messages by runner

11. This is the least satisfactory method of passing information, since misunderstandings can occur more easily. A verbal message should take the same form as a written message, except that the time only and not the date need be given.

12. Verbal messages should always be short. The sender of the message should :—

- Select an intelligent man to take it.
- Think it out carefully, so that he can give it to the messenger without hesitation.
- Dictate it slowly and clearly.
- After a pause make the messenger repeat it *twice* to ensure that he has memorized it.
- Ensure that the messenger is quite clear where to take the message and what route he is to follow.

SECTION 21.—SECURITY OF INFORMATION

General

1. It is the responsibility of all ranks to take every precaution which will prevent the enemy from gaining information. It should be a matter of discipline to observe the rules for security of information since, if they are complied with, one of the most valuable sources of information open to the enemy will be closed. The principal sources of leakage are detailed below.

Careless talk

2. Subjects relative to naval, military or air operations or movements of any kind must never be discussed by soldiers in the presence or hearing of any stranger, whether in uniform or not, whether on leave or in or out of the line.

Disclosure of information in letters and documents

3. The regulations regarding the contents of private correspondence must always be strictly complied with. Allusions in private correspondence during a war to any Service matters whatsoever, that is to British, Allied, enemy or neutral naval, military or air forces, their movements and operations, are wholly forbidden.

4. Private letters are censored. In a battalion most of this censorship is carried out by the officers, though each man is permitted to send one letter each week on private and family matters only, enclosed in a green envelope, which is not censored within the unit, but at the base.

Further details of the regulations regarding the contents of correspondence are contained in Appendix A.

5. Troops in forward areas should never unnecessarily carry anything which may give information to the enemy. In this category are included :—

- (a) Marked maps showing positions of our troops.
- (b) Private letters. These may give an indication of the locations of units or the state of morale at home.
- (c) Any document showing the name of the unit or formation to which a man belongs.

6. All waste paper left behind in billets or camps must be destroyed.

RT and telephone security

7. Every transmission by RT is liable to interception by the enemy. The information gained in this way will supplement that received from other sources, such as patrols, prisoners of war, aerial reconnaissance and may often complete the build-up by the enemy intelligence of a picture of future operations.

8. It is therefore of particular importance that the rules for RT security should be strictly observed at all times.

The following are rules for speaking on RT :—

- (a) Before speaking, think out what you are going to say.
- (b) Use standard RT procedure.
- (c) Always use the authorized code signs, code names, code words and map reference codes.
- (d) Never refer to units by their names or nicknames.
- (e) Never use jargon. For example, do not refer to supporting aircraft by a phrase such as "our feathered friends" or to tanks as "tin cans".
- (f) Give the locations of the enemy in clear.
- (g) Always give the positions of our own troops in code with the following exceptions :—

- (i) Do not connect a code name or an encoded map reference with something known to the enemy. For example, do not say "I have just captured an SP gun at PLUM" (code word) or at "JQNOPE" (encoded map reference).

- (ii) Do not connect descriptions of places with code words or encoded map references. For example do not say "I am at village PLUM" or "I am at village JQNOPE". Say instead "I am at PLUM" or "I am at JQNOPE".

9. It is also possible for the enemy to intercept line telephone conversations especially during periods of protracted defence and the rules for speaking on RT should apply equally to the telephone.

It is particularly dangerous to talk about future events either on the wireless or the telephone, and this must only be done if it is certain that the enemy will not have time to make use of any information he may intercept.

SECTION 22.—CONDUCT OF BRITISH PRISONERS OF WAR

10. As stated in Section 18, the information obtained from prisoners of war can be of great value. According to the Geneva Convention of 1929, signed by all the Great Powers, a prisoner of war must give his name, rank and number. He is not bound to give any other information. It is the duty of every British prisoner of war to :—

- (a) Destroy anything which may give information to the enemy and to ensure that no weapon falls intact into the enemy's hands.
- (b) Try to escape. The earlier the escape is attempted, the better the chances of success, since the guarding of prisoners of war in the field is always difficult.
- (c) Give only his name, rank and number and answer NO OTHER QUESTIONS. A prisoner who refuses to answer questions will defeat any methods of interrogation. The enemy will not dare to carry out any threats, as ill-treatment may lead to reprisals against his men in our hands. Moreover, a prisoner who will not answer questions, will gain the respect of his captors.

11. The enemy will try various methods to obtain information from prisoners including :—

- (a) Impersonation of British or Allied prisoners and mixing with genuine prisoners.
- (b) Offering special privileges and by friendly reception on capture.
- (c) The use of concealed microphones in rooms.
- (d) Suggesting that another officer or man has talked freely, giving the impression that silence is no longer necessary.
- (e) Renewed interrogation long after capture made in a casual and friendly way.

There are many other ways which the enemy will use to obtain information.

CHAPTER VI

BATTLECRAFT AND BATTLE PROCEDURE

SECTION 23.—BATTLECRAFT

General

1. Experience has shown the benefits of having a recognized and well-understood way of tackling minor tactical problems when rapid action is essential to success.

A technique which is understood by all enables every man to understand the part that he and his comrades have to play. Such a technique when properly applied will save time, for orders can be reduced in length and long drawn out explanations as to method are avoided.

2. The fact that there are certain standard ways of carrying out minor tactical operations must not be taken to mean that they should be applied completely or without any variation; nor does it follow that the formations, distances, and timings employed should be rigidly observed.

3. As in a game, the learner is taught conventional strokes and methods, so in tactics junior ranks must be taught conventional methods of dealing with minor tactical problems. The examples of battlecraft given in this pamphlet should be regarded as the basic strokes in the game of minor tactics.

Battlecraft must, however, always be related to the ground. To teach it on the barrack square without reference to the ground will tend to produce rigidity of thought and false lessons.

Method of teaching battlecraft

4. The method of teaching battlecraft should be as follows:—

- (a) A short explanation.
- (b) A demonstration showing the particular method which is being taught. If a demonstration showing the wrong way is given, care must be taken not to exaggerate unduly. The right and wrong way of giving demonstrations need careful control, the wrong method should not show men up in ridiculous situations that would never occur in battle.
- (c) Practice of the particular battlecraft in "slow motion".
- (d) Repetition on different pieces of ground, emphasis now being laid on speed and individual prowess in fieldcraft in addition to the action as a team.

Battlecraft can be taught to junior commanders by means of TEWTs. The methods of applying battlecraft are dealt with in Sections 24 and 25.

SECTION 24.—SECTION FORMATIONS

1. Sections will deploy when within range of enemy small arms fire. The formation adopted will depend on:—

- (a) The ground and on the direction from which the enemy fire is to be expected.
- (b) The need for control by the section commander.
- (c) The necessity of producing the maximum fire with the minimum delay.

2. The Bren group should usually be on the open flank or the flank which will provide the best intermediate fire positions.

The interval between individuals should be about 5 yards by day. When under fire it is a natural instinct for troops to bunch together, and this must be avoided.

The distances between groups cannot be laid down, but will vary to suit the ground.

3. During the advance, the section commander may well have to change formations, manoeuvring his section so as to make the best use of cover.

When the platoon is deployed he is responsible for his own protection. He may protect the section by using scouts. The method of employment of scouts is given in Chapter IX.

4. When sections are deployed, orders will be given by signals or by brief instructions such as "Behind me in arrowhead", "Across that bridge and line the bank", etc.

Section formations, with the advantages and disadvantages, are as follows:—

	Advantages	Disadvantages
(a) <i>Single File.</i>	Good for control; not vulnerable to enfilade fire. Useful for moving along hedgerows, ditches, etc.	Bad for fire production; vulnerable for frontal fire.
(b) <i>Diamond.</i>	Good for control; not vulnerable to enfilade fire. Good for all round fire production and observation.	Presents a good target to frontal fire. Not very good for fire production to the front.

*Advantages**Disadvantages*

- (c) *Arrowhead.* Not vulnerable to frontal fire; good for fire protection; probably the best formation for crossing open ground.
- (d) *Extended Line.* The formation used in the final assault. Very good for fire production (from the hip) and bayonet fighting.
- Control more difficult than in diamond. Vulnerable to enfilade fire.
- Control difficult. Very vulnerable to enfilade fire.

These are the four basic section formations, in each case the positioning of the Bren and rifle groups is the responsibility of the section commander. He may order a gap to be left between groups, and may even split the rifle group into two parts as is frequently done in jungle fighting.

SECTION 25.—PLATOON FORMATIONS

1. Platoon formations depend mainly on the need for control on the ground and the degree to which the platoon commander will require to manoeuvre. For example, when advancing against an unlocated enemy, the platoon commander will wish to keep in hand the bulk of the platoon to enable him to manoeuvre and destroy the enemy when his position is located. On the other hand, in the assault on a known enemy locality the platoon commander may wish to bring the maximum number of bayonets on to the objective at the same time. The formation to be adopted in the assault will also depend on the frontage and depth of the objective.

2. It will be necessary for a platoon to deploy its sections in order to avoid casualties from artillery and mortar fire or from air attack. On the other hand, sections must not be so greatly dispersed that the platoon commander loses control. As a guide, the distance between sections should not exceed 100 yards, and may be less if the country is such that they are out of view to the platoon commander.



Fig 3.—Single file

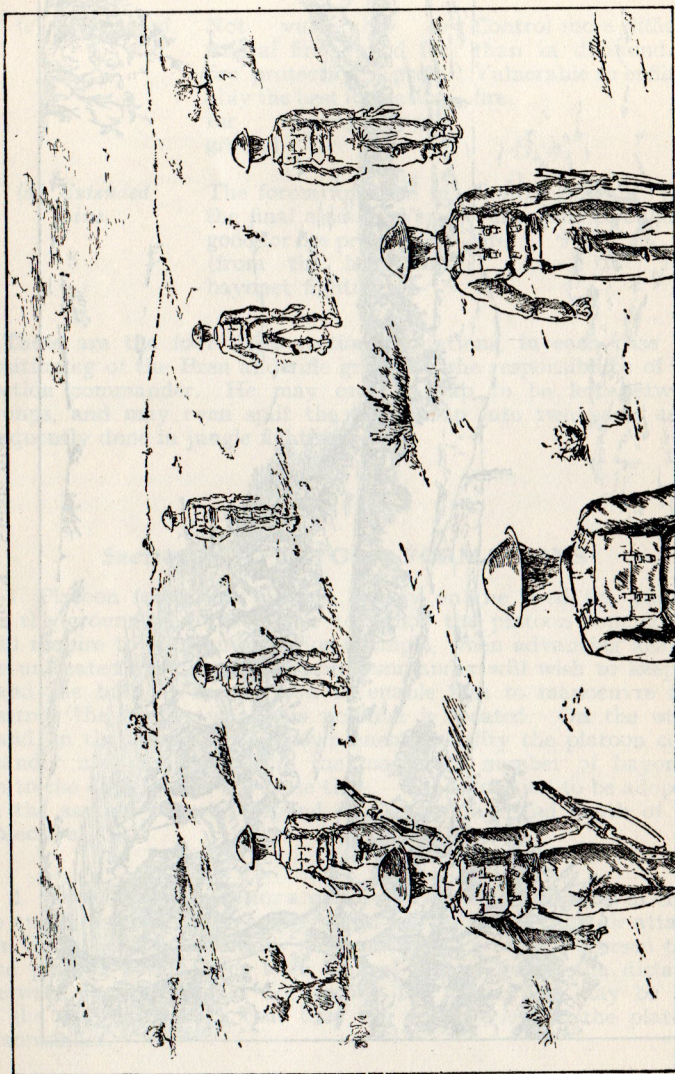


Fig 4.—Diamond



Fig 5.—Arrowhead

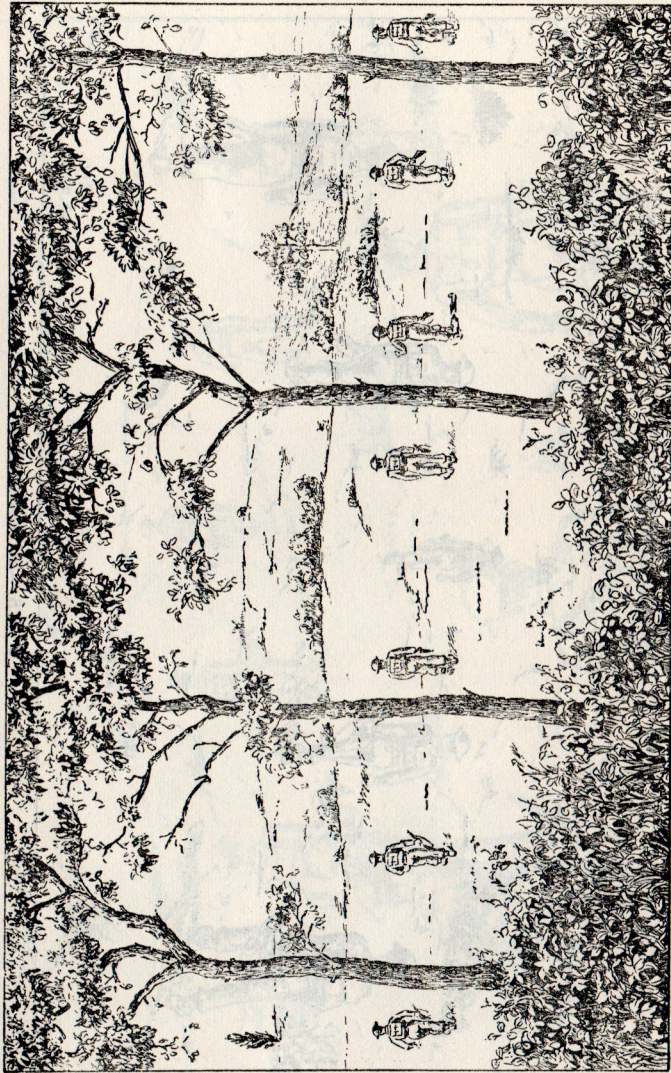


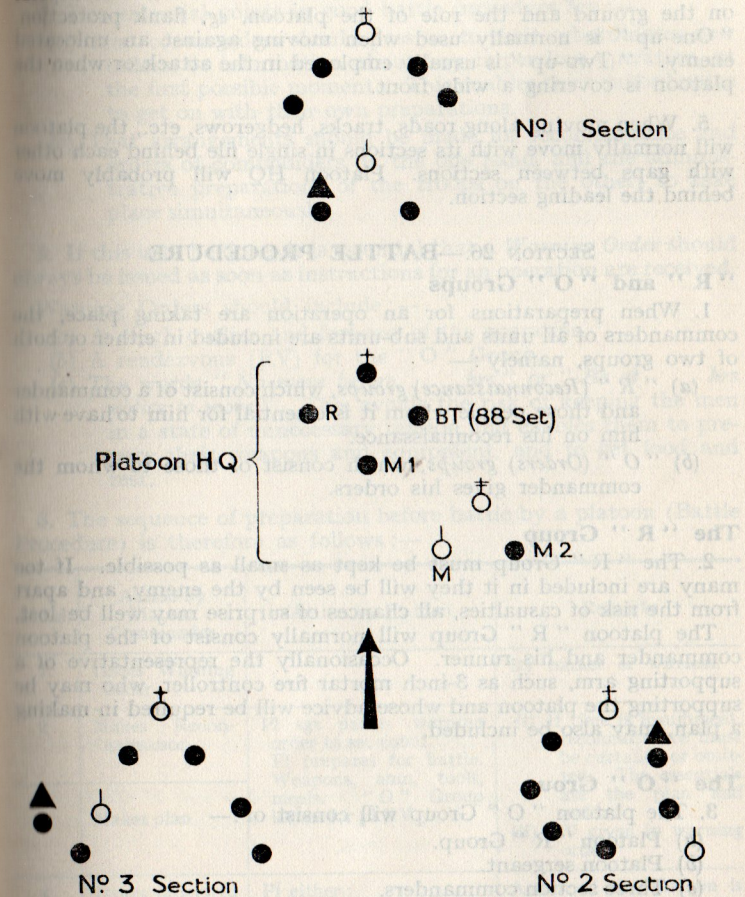
Fig 6.—Extended line

8. When moving across country in the open the formations adopted by a platoon should be based on one of the following :—

(a) "one-up"

(b) "two-up"

Here is an example in diagrammatic form of the "one-up" formation :—



LEGEND					
●	PI Comd	♂	PI Sgt	♂	Sec Comd
○	2ic or NCOic	● M	Mortar No	▲	Bren Gunner
BT ●	Batman	● R	Runner	●	Individual

Fig 7.—Platoon formation. "One-up"

4. The formation "two-up" is a reversal of that shown above, *ie*, two sections leading with one in rear. Variations can, of course, be made to both. For example, when moving "one-up" No. 3 section might move immediately in rear of No. 1 Section with No. 2 Section moving on the flank. The exact formation will depend on the ground and the role of the platoon, *eg*, flank protection. "One-up" is normally used when moving against an unlocated enemy. "Two-up" is usually employed in the attack or when the platoon is covering a wide front.

5. When moving along roads, tracks, hedgerows, etc., the platoon will normally move with its sections in single file behind each other with gaps between sections. Platoon HQ will probably move behind the leading section.

SECTION 26.—BATTLE PROCEDURE

"R" and "O" Groups

1. When preparations for an operation are taking place, the commanders of all units and sub-units are included in either or both of two groups, namely :—

- "R" (*Reconnaissance*) groups, which consist of a commander and those people whom it is essential for him to have with him on his reconnaissance.
- "O" (*Orders*) groups, which consist of those to whom the commander gives his orders.

The "R" Group

2. The "R" Group must be kept as small as possible. If too many are included in it they will be seen by the enemy, and apart from the risk of casualties, all chances of surprise may well be lost.

The platoon "R" Group will normally consist of the platoon commander and his runner. Occasionally the representative of a supporting arm, such as 3-inch mortar fire controller, who may be supporting the platoon and whose advice will be required in making a plan, may also be included.

The "O" Group

3. The platoon "O" Group will consist of :—

- Platoon "R" Group.
- Platoon sergeant.
- Three section commanders.
- NCO IC 2-inch mortar.

In certain circumstances some of those who normally form part of the "O" Group may be engaged in other duties or their role may be such that they can safely be briefed at a later stage. This applies

particularly to seconds-in-command. For example, a platoon sergeant will sometimes remain in charge of a platoon while the commander gives orders to the "O" Group. He must, however, be given his orders as soon as possible.

4. Two essential points in good battle procedure are :—

- That commanders should pass on to their subordinates new orders, or information about any impending operation, at the first possible moment. This enables their subordinates to get on with their own preparations.
- That arrangements should be made for reconnaissance and orders of commanders on the one hand, and the administrative preparations of the troops on the other, to take place simultaneously.

5. If this is to be done, it is essential that a *Warning Order* should always be issued as soon as instructions for an operation are received.

Warning Orders should include :—

- A rough outline and forecast of the operation.
- A rendezvous (RV) for the "O" Group.
- The words "*No move before . . . hrs*" or "*Be at . . . hrs notice to move*". This avoids the risk of keeping the men in a state of unnecessary tension and enables them to prepare their weapons and equipment, and to get food and rest.

6. The sequence of preparation before battle by a platoon (Battle Procedure) is therefore as follows :—

Serial	Action by Platoon Commander	Action by Platoon	Remarks
1	Issues Warning Order		By runner or wireless.
2	Makes Reconnaissance	Pl sgt passes warning order to sec comd. Pl prepares for battle. Weapons, amn, tools, meals. "O" Group leaves for pl RV.	(i) If time is insufficient, reconnaissance must be curtailed or omitted. The essentials are the plan and orders.
3	Makes plan		(ii) RV given in warning order.
4	Issues orders to "O" Group	Pl either : (a) Continues preparations, or (b) Moves off to RV, or (c) Rests	Action of the platoon is dependent on circumstances, <i>eg</i> , time available and distance if any which pl must move before the operation.

SECTION 27.—RECONNAISSANCE

1. The particular points, which a platoon commander must look for when carrying out a reconnaissance will depend on the type of operation which is being undertaken. For example, in the attack he will select the lines of advance for the platoon: in defence he will decide on the siting of section posts.

2. On the other hand, it must be remembered that the reconnaissance itself should be planned in the same way as any other phase of battle. When making a reconnaissance, a platoon commander should:—

- (a) Obtain all available information about the situation.
- (b) Be certain in his own mind of the aim of his reconnaissance and decide what to look for to fulfil that aim.
- (c) Before starting, study the map and any air photographs available to get as much information as possible about the ground, likely view points, routes, obstacles, etc.
- (d) Consider the time available. He must give himself sufficient time to make a plan after his reconnaissance and before issuing his orders. He must remember, also, that each of his section commanders must have time to make their own reconnaissances and give out their orders.
- (e) If in contact with the enemy he must remember that personal concealment during the reconnaissance is essential.

SECTION 28.—PLANNING

1. Commanders are taught when faced with a tactical situation, to make an "appreciation", which amounts to thinking out the problem in a logical sequence and arriving at a suitable plan. The junior leader should always make such an appreciation in his head. The mental process will soon become instinctive.

2. The sequence of an appreciation should be as follows:—

- (a) The *aim* to be achieved.
- (b) The *factors* which affect the attainment of this aim, the most important of which are:—
 - (i) *Relative strength* of our own troops and of the enemy. Morale, armament, and dispositions of the enemy as compared to our own.
 - (ii) *Ground*.
 - (iii) *Time and space*.
- (c) *Courses open to* :—
 - (i) *Ourselves*.
 - (ii) *Enemy*.
- (d) *Plan*.

As far as platoon and section commanders are concerned, the three factors given above must always be considered. The list is, however, not exhaustive, and special circumstances may give rise to others, such as the weather, the hours of daylight, or darkness, the need for security, and communications. *Every factor* considered must be followed by a *deduction*; for example, "The ground is impassable to tracked vehicles, therefore tanks cannot accompany the assaulting infantry". A factor from which no useful deduction can be made is valueless.

SECTION 29.—ORDERS AND BRIEFING

General

1. The test of any order, or of a briefing, is that afterwards all concerned should know exactly what their commander intends to do, how he intends to do it, and what part they themselves have to play. Normally all orders given within a battalion will be verbal ones, although they will often be confirmed in writing if the operations being planned are complicated.

Verbal orders

2. Before any operation, orders are passed down from battalion to company and platoon and to section commanders, who pass them on to their sections. At each level the subordinate commander must extract that which affects his own command.

3. Orders should be given out in the logical sequence outlined below. This helps to ensure that nothing of importance is omitted. At the same time the recipients, being used to this sequence, can grasp all the details easily and quickly. Provided that nothing important is missed out, the shorter the order the better.

Sequence of orders

4. A position should be selected from which it is possible for the "O" Group to see the ground. If this cannot be done, then a map (or air photograph) must be used. The platoon commander must first point out on the ground, or on the map, the features and places to which he will refer in his orders. He will then issue his orders in the following sequence:—

(a) Information

(i) *Regarding the enemy*.

(ii) *Regarding our own troops*. In platoon orders this will include details of what neighbouring platoons, companies, and supporting arms are doing. In section orders it will include information about neighbouring sections, platoons and supporting arms.

- (b) *Intention*.—State clearly *what* you intend your platoon or section to do, but not *how* they are to do it. The intention will always be worded thus :—

No. 1 Platoon *will* capture the copse ;
or No. 3 Section *will* hold the area of the tree-stump.

- (c) *Method*.—Describe clearly and briefly how you intend to carry out your intention.

- (d) *Administration*.—Any alteration to the normal equipment of the platoon or section should be included here : also details of ammunition supply, and medical and feeding arrangements.

- (e) *Intercommunication*.—Include here :—

- (i) The position of platoon headquarters (in the attack the intended route of platoon headquarters).
- (ii) Details of any pre-arranged signals by light or other means, *eg*, success.
- (iii) Synchronization of watches.
- (iv) Channel for wireless set.

- (f) *Questions*.—From “ O ” Group.

5. *The intention is the most vital part of any order*.—Provided subordinates know what their commander wants, they can at least make an intelligent effort to carry out his intention. If they do not clearly understand what his intention is, things are bound to go wrong.

6. The “ *Method* ” paragraph should start with a brief summary of the general plan. For example, No. 1 Platoon Commander giving orders for an attack might well start his method paragraph by saying, “ The platoon will attack two up, right 2 Section, left 1 Section, 3 Section in reserve ”. The detailed moves and action of the sections should then be followed by details of supporting fire. Sometimes it is best to deal with an operation in two or more phases. If this is the case separate orders should be given out before each phase.

7. In giving orders the word “ *will* ” must always be used in giving instructions to anyone under command. When referring to the future action of superior, or supporting units, “ *will* ” is to be avoided, and phrases such as “ *is going to* ” will be used.

8. It is most important that orders should be given out clearly and confidently and that nothing should be omitted. Interruptions should not be allowed. When orders have been given out everyone should be given an opportunity to think over his task, and check his notes. Each member of the “ O ” Group will then be asked if he has any questions. Since even verbal orders are sometimes bound

to be quite long and complicated, it is wise, when receiving them to make short written notes of important points, and it is essential, when giving them, to have notes available so as to make sure that nothing is left out.

9. When it has not been possible for the whole “ O ” Group to view the ground over which the operation is to take place, individuals should do so separately. It will be an advantage if, in receiving orders, subordinate commanders are arranged in the relative positions they will occupy on the ground.

Briefing

10. There is always the risk that leaders may become casualties early in the battle, and all NCOs and men should therefore not only know what they must do themselves but should understand thoroughly the higher commander's intention and plan. Furthermore no man can be expected to give of his best unless he really knows what is happening.

11. In addition, to the normal orders which the platoon commander gives to his section commanders, and which they pass on to their sections, the platoon commander should, if there is time, brief all his men before every operation, unless the company commander, or the commanding officer is briefing everyone himself.

SECTION 30.—SNAP ORDERS

Operations often do not go entirely according to the original plan. It will then be necessary to issue snap orders. In these orders the “ *intention* ” is the essential. The method of execution will normally be left to the recipient. For example, a section commander may simply be told to “ clear that house ”. How he does it is left to him. A thorough understanding, and a confident application of battlecraft, will speed up time spent in giving orders in battle.

SECTION 31.—CONTROL

Once the battle starts it will be difficult for the platoon commander to keep all his sections within earshot and sight. He should try to do so if possible, but he must take care that men are not too close together as a result and do not thus present good targets to the enemy. During an advance or attack, he may be able to make use of bounds on which he can halt his platoon while giving further instructions. If his section commanders are out of earshot and out of sight, he can control them by :—

- (a) Going to see them himself.
- (b) Sending a written or verbal message by his runner.
- (c) Summoning them to him. This will rarely be wise since it will deprive the section of their leader just when he may be most needed.

CHAPTER VII

FIRE AND MOVEMENT

SECTION 32.—GENERAL

1. The primary aim of the infantry is to close with the enemy and destroy them. To achieve this aim movement is necessary. It is possible to move forward under cover of the ground, with the support of fire or by a combination of both. The enemy will select positions which, as far as possible, give no ground cover to the attackers and by means of fire, mines and obstacles, do their utmost to halt any advance. The production of supporting fire is therefore necessary in order to keep the enemy's heads down and make movement possible.

2. This combination of fire and movement is the basis of platoon and section tactics—it demands from the soldier the highest standards of weapon training and fieldcraft. It is above all a matter of team work which is achieved by good leadership, a sound knowledge of the characteristics of platoon weapons, and of the use of ground, and by practice.

SECTION 33.—FIRE

General

1. Superiority of fire is achieved by producing the greatest fire support available at the right time and place. Troops will generally be supported on to the main objective by artillery fire, but they will have to fight their way through the objective with their own resources as by that time the artillery fire is likely to have been lifted to engage other tasks. *Artillery fire may indeed fail to silence all enemy opposition. Platoons must then be prepared to fight forward under the fire of their own weapons.*

2. The aim should be that at all times a weapon or weapons should be prepared to fire or actually firing in order to cover the move forward of the remainder of the platoon. The weapon may be the 2-inch mortar or the light machine gun of the reserve section. The 2-inch mortar can support by overhead fire, but a light machine gun giving supporting fire should if possible be sited to a flank, ideally at 90 degrees to the direction of the advance. In any case, its position should be such that its fire will not be masked by the advance of the sections or men which it is supporting.

3. Each section is organized into a Bren group and rifle group. It can therefore fight its own way forward by fire and movement. Fire is best produced by the Bren group, whereas the rifle group is organized for movement and assault. The rifle group will, however, often be required to cover the move forward of the Bren group to a better position.

SECTION 34.—SELECTION OF FIRE POSITIONS

1. The selection of fire positions requires a knowledge both of the characteristics of weapons and of the use of ground. The requirements of a fire position will vary with the task. For example, in the attack, the position should be easy to advance from; in defence, concealment and a covered approach may well have priority.

2. To select the best fire positions, much imagination must be shown. Sometimes it may be necessary to use trees, roof tops, haystacks, or walls to produce fire effect at all. This may result in plunging fire, but must be overcome by accurate shooting. Cunningly concealed fire positions will puzzle the enemy, protect the troops from observed fire and safeguard them against air attack.

SECTION 35.—FIRE ORDERS

1. Fire orders are not an end in themselves, they are designed for one purpose only—to bring fire on the enemy as quickly and effectively as possible.

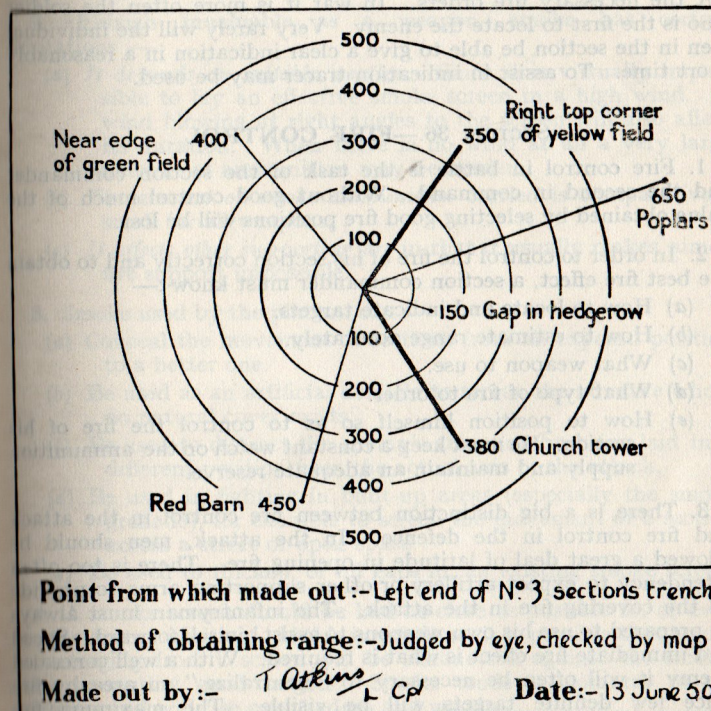


FIG 8.—Range Card

2. The indication of targets is probably the most difficult part of any fire order, particularly in the attack. In the defence every man in the section will know the ground around him, reference points will have been given and range cards made (*see* page 47).

3. In the attack, or advance, however, the ground will be unknown and sections will be constantly moving. Ranges will not be accurately known, reference points may not have been given, and the enemy will be well concealed and dug in and targets will therefore be difficult to pick out.

4. When normal methods of indication have failed, the use of tracer ammunition is a valuable means of indicating targets in the attack. It is dangerous in the defence because it gives away positions to the enemy.

5. During training it is too often readily assumed that the section commander will himself first see the enemy and immediately give out the necessary fire orders. In war it is more often the soldier who is the first to locate the enemy. Very rarely will the individual men in the section be able to give a clear indication in a reasonably short time. To assist in indication tracer may be used.

SECTION 36.—FIRE CONTROL

1. Fire control in battle is the task of the section commander and the second in command. Without good control much of the value obtained by selecting good fire positions will be lost.

2. In order to control the fire of his section correctly and to obtain the best fire effect, a section commander must know :—

- (a) How to locate and indicate targets.
- (b) How to estimate range accurately.
- (c) What weapon to use.
- (d) What type of fire to order.
- (e) How to position himself so as to control the fire of his section. He must keep a constant watch on the ammunition supply and maintain an adequate reserve.

3. There is a big distinction between fire control in the attack and fire control in the defence. In the attack, men should be allowed a great deal of latitude in opening fire. There is too often a tendency to expect artillery or other supporting arms to provide all the covering fire in the attack. The infantryman must always be prepared to use his own weapons to assist himself forward. Speed and immediate fire effect is what is required. With a well concealed enemy it will often be necessary to "neutralize" an area by fire since few definite targets will be visible. The maximum fire

superiority must be provided for this purpose; not least fire from the weapons of the platoon itself.

4. In the defence the vital factor in fire control is that the too early opening of fire may give away positions to the enemy and destroy the effect of hours of hard work in concealment in a few seconds.

SECTION 37.—SMOKE

1. The object of using smoke is to screen movement from aimed fire or observation. It may also be used to distract the enemy's attention. For all practical purposes, smoke will only be used in the attack since it favours the attacker but hampers the defence. The smoke bomb of the 2-inch mortar and the smoke grenade are the two methods of producing smoke in the platoon. Often however smoke screen will be produced from outside sources by artillery or the 3-inch mortar platoon.

2. Although invaluable as a weapon, smoke has certain limitations :—

- (a) *It depends on suitable weather.*—Since it is virtually impossible to lay an effective smoke screen in a high wind. A wind blowing at right angles to the screen will also affect its duration. When there is no wind at all a very large amount of ammunition may be needed.
- (b) *The amount of smoke ammunition* carried is comparatively small for all weapons.
- (c) *It affects other supporting fire* in that it usually makes aimed fire support impossible.

3. Smoke used by the platoon can :—

- (a) Conceal the movement of sections from an exposed position to a better one.
- (b) Be used as an artificial defilade to screen the advance where no natural cover exists.
- (c) Be used to distract the enemy's attention by being laid in a different position from the actual axis of the attack.
- (d) Be used in fighting in built-up areas (especially the smoke grenade), for example to screen the movement of a section across a street or open space.
- (e) Be used to thicken, or fill gaps in, an existing smoke screen.

4. A smoke screen should be laid as close as possible to, or even on, the enemy position. If this is not done, it is possible that troops on emerging from a screen will be silhouetted against the smoke, thus presenting good targets. Smoke tends to conform to the contours and will rise over hedges and woods.

SECTION 38.—MOVEMENT

1. As shown in Section 33, movement in the race of the enemy should be covered by fire. This does not mean, however, that it is impossible to move unless a heavy weight of fire is coming down on the enemy. The most important part of an attack is the movement towards the objective. Supporting fire is one of the aids to that movement. A knowledge of how to move and how to use ground for movement is essential to enable troops to close with the enemy with minimum casualties.

2. Normally troops in action will move at walking pace. In the final stages of an assault, however, they will double. On other occasions it may be necessary to double or to crawl. If, for example, attacking troops move into enemy defensive fire, it is nearly always correct to double forward and through it. To lie down is frequently the most dangerous as well as the most ineffective course. It must be remembered, however, that doubling and crawling are tiring and should be reserved for the critical situation and the final assault.

3. When it is necessary to cross an open space, such as a gap in a hedgerow, it is best for the whole section or group to double across it together before the enemy has time to fire. When wider gaps are under observation, it may be necessary to filter men across by crawling in ones or twos at irregular intervals.

SECTION 39.—GROUND

The type of country over which a battle is fought is the basic factor which determines how the principles of fire and movement will be applied. In open country the problem is one of concealment, whereas in close country the difficulty lies in finding positions which provide observation and good fields of fire. The skilful use of ground whether in attack or defence can achieve surprise and save lives, and it is therefore necessary constantly to practise the appreciation of ground. This is generally understood as the development of an eye for ground. This attribute can be developed only with practice and a systematic approach to the problem. This we call an appreciation. This appreciation should be considered under the following headings:—

- (a) *Fire positions.*
- (b) *Observation positions.*
- (c) *Cover from fire.*
- (d) *Cover from view.*
- (e) *Obstacles.*

Always consider the ground from the *enemy's point of view.*

SECTION 40.—COVER

1. Cover from view is not necessarily cover from fire, especially if you are seen getting there. Concealment both from ground and air is the chief means of achieving surprise. Some of the main types of cover are:—

- (a) *Undulating ground.*—This is the least obvious form of cover. When skilfully used it can give protection from direct fire, and it affords no ranging marks for the enemy.
- (b) *Sunken roads, the beds of streams and ditches.*—These give excellent cover often from fire as well as from view. There is always the danger, however, that the enemy may pay particular attention to them. They may be mined or booby-trapped, and precautions must be taken against an ambush. If the roads or ditches are straight, the enemy may be able to fire down them in enfilade.
- (c) *Hedges and bushes.*—These give cover from view but not from fire. In open country they may afford a good ranging mark for the enemy.
- (d) *Standing crops.*—These provide cover from view, but movement through them can generally be detected.
- (e) *Woods.*—Give cover from view both from air and ground to men and vehicles. They give some protection from small arms fire, but HE bombs and shells will explode in the branches of trees and may cause heavy casualties unless troops are dug in and have overhead cover.
- (f) *Buildings, walls and other artificial features.*—Provide concealment and protection from fire. When isolated they provide good ranging marks for the enemy.

2. Ground which the firer cannot see from his position is called "dead ground". Platoon and section commanders should be able to recognize ground which is likely to be "dead" to the enemy. Confusion may arise if an area is described as "dead" without specifying the position of the observer. For example "The track junction is dead to the enemy in the farm".

3. Troops under cover or in dead ground are safe from observed enemy fire. These areas, however, are always likely to be selected by the enemy as defensive fire tasks for his artillery and mortars.

REMEMBER THAT WITHOUT SOME KIND OF OVERHEAD COVER THERE IS NO PROTECTION FROM OBSERVATION FROM THE AIR.

Some mistakes

4. Some common mistakes in the use of ground which result in casualties and the loss of surprise are :—

- (a) Carelessness by officers and NCOs when making a reconnaissance, *eg*, the careless unfolding of a map when in the open—neglecting to take proper precautions when moving to and from an OP.
- (b) Unnecessary movement in a position overlooked by an enemy.
- (c) Using conspicuous land marks such as isolated cottages, trees and woods.
- (d) Halting troops in the neighbourhood of road and track junctions, which will almost certainly be registered as targets by the enemy.
- (e) Neglect of normal precautions to guard against air observation.
- (f) Bad track discipline, which means making new tracks which the enemy can photograph from the air.

SECTION 41.—USE OF THE MAP AND AIR PHOTOGRAPHS

1. To assist in the best appreciation of ground, platoon and section commanders must be good map readers. A high standard of map reading is not an ability merely to read co-ordinates quickly or find one's way along roads. A map is the result of a very careful reconnaissance recorded on paper by an expert, and a high standard is reached only when the reader can get an accurate mental picture of the ground by studying the map.

2. In the same way an air photograph if properly studied will supplement what can be seen on the ground or in a map. Practice in the reading of maps and air photographs is essential. The air photograph will show up new tracks either made by men or vehicles which will often disclose otherwise concealed gun or infantry positions.

SECTION 42.—SELECTION OF LINES OF ADVANCE

1. The best lines of advance are those which provide the best positions for observation and fire on the enemy, and at the same time the maximum cover from view and fire throughout. These two requirements usually conflict. Good fire positions and OPs are normally on high ground. Covered lines of approach are usually on low ground. A further difficulty is that it may not be easy to keep direction. These factors must be considered whenever

a line of advance is being selected. In general it is better to cross open country early in the advance if this is possible, and to use the covered approaches near the enemy positions.

2. The selection of lines of advance of a platoon is largely a matter of map reading. The best method of doing this is to follow the keyword "Ground".

G General.

R Ridges.

O Observation.

U Undergrowth.

N Non-passable.

D Defilade.

After deciding on the area to be studied, which must be considerably wider than the area to be occupied or crossed, apply the headings as follows :—

G *General*.—Get a rough idea of the character of the area. Is it high rolling downland, or flat low-lying fields, open or close country ?

R *Ridges*.—Take a grease pencil (any other colour except blue) and mark on the talc with a single line the highest part of all ridges and spurs (*ie*, the watersheds). Mark the streams or lowest lines of valleys and re-entrants in blue (*ie*, the water course).

O *Observation*.—Circle with a pencil any particularly good viewpoints or detached features.

U *Undergrowth, or cover*.—Study the location of villages, woods, belts of trees, scrub or rough ground.

N *Non-passable*.—Study the obstacles, woods, villages, rivers, canals and railway lines.

D *Defilade*.—The covered lines of approach to any point, and the areas that afford cover, will now be easily picked out.

A clear picture of the ground as a whole, its possibilities and its disadvantages, will now have been formed in the mind. Clean the talc and make up your plan.

The study of the ground carried out by such means may often give you the probable enemy positions and action as well as our own. It will be easy to remember and read the ground from the contours without the markings. A clean talc will be wanted on which to record the plan.

Reconnaissance for lines of advance

3. A man making a reconnaissance must know what he is looking for and how to look for it. His reconnaissance must be confined to essentials and must be made from the nearest point from which these essentials can be seen. Reconnaissance for lines of advance can be divided into :—

- (a) An endeavour to locate the enemy positions.
- (b) A decision on the line of advance it is intended to follow.

4. It is very often unwise to decide on the whole of a line of advance from the original reconnaissance point. The ground may be quite different when it is reached, and fresh decisions may be necessary at each bound. The NCO required to lead his section round a flank may merely be told the general direction he is to take. He should be trained to use ground himself and he must be relied upon to use his own skill and judgement. It is fatal to attempt in orders to detail a lengthy line of advance to a NCO. It is unlikely to be the best line, and unforeseen circumstances may soon require a deviation from it.

SECTION 43.—KEEPING DIRECTION

1. It is often difficult to keep direction, particularly at night, in fog or in close country. To make a detour to obtain concealment or to avoid an obstacle is liable to throw leaders off the correct line of advance.

2. The following are some of the means of keeping direction :—

- (a) The use of compass, map, and air photographs.
- (b) The use of a rough sketch copied from the map or air photo.
- (c) By keeping two prominent objects in view.
- (d) By using a series of easily recognizable landmarks each visible from the previous one.
- (e) By using the stars; the sun and the moon can also be used if their movement is thoroughly understood.
- (f) By memorizing the route from the map (or air photo). Points such as distances, contours, and the direction of streams will all help.
- (g) The back view should be remembered. Patrols and others who may have to find their way back should look back at regular intervals to note landmarks behind them for their return journey.

- (h) In exposed districts, trees tend to grow away from the direction of the prevailing wind. Moss may grow on the leeward side of the trunk.
- (j) Direction marks may sometimes be left on an outward journey (pegs, small piles of stones or the blazing of trees).
- (k) If the route is being walked by day with a view to guiding by night, men must take particular notice of skylines and objects that they will be able to recognize by night.
- (l) All NCOs should be able to tell the points of the compass by the use of the hands of the watch and the sun.

SECTION 44.—MOVEMENT BY NIGHT

1. Darkness gives protection against aimed fire and enables surprise to be gained. Movement by night requires considerable practice, particularly in the crossing of obstacles.

2. The main differences between night and day operations are that by night :—

- (a) Enemy fire is unaimed, but machine guns can fire on fixed lines.
- (b) Sight is largely replaced by hearing; the avoidance of noise is therefore of the greatest importance and ears should be used rather than eyes.
- (c) Objects are generally visible only on skylines; this increases the importance of low ground both for movement and observation.
- (d) The difficulty of maintaining direction makes previous daylight reconnaissance important.
- (e) Control is difficult. Close formations are therefore very necessary.

3. Particular attention should be paid to the following points at night :—

- (a) Equipment should be tested beforehand, to see that it does not rattle. Sandbags wrapped round equipment and tools will deaden sound.
- (b) Orders and messages should be given in a whisper just loud enough for them to be heard by the recipient. A simple system of signals should be arranged.
- (c) Particular care must be taken in crossing gaps where movement may show against the skyline.

- (d) The stars, the moon, the wind, and landmarks silhouetted against the sky, should be used to keep direction.
- (e) Commanders must be well forward for control of pace and direction. The platoon commander should always be in the lead at night. He must practise using a compass at night.

SECTION 45.—FIELD SIGNALS

Amid the noise of battle when sections are deployed, or when travelling in lorries or APCs, voice control will be impossible. A system of simple signals is therefore essential. When on foot these signals except (f) and (g) below will be preceded by a short blast on the whistle to help attract the attention of those to whom the signal is addressed. The following are the standard signals :—

- (a) *Deploy*.—The arm fully extended over the head and waved slowly from side to side; the hand to be open and to come down as low as the hips on both sides of the body. If deployment to either flank is wanted, the commander will point to the flank concerned after completing the signal.
- (b) *Advance or follow me*.—The arm is swung from rear to front below the shoulder.
- (c) *Halt*.—The arm is raised to the full extent above the head.
- (d) *Go back or turn round*.—The arm circled above the head.
- (e) *Close or join me*.—The hand placed on top of the head, the elbow to be square to the right or the left according to which hand is used.
- (f) *Double or increase speed (MT)*.—The clenched hand moved up and down between the thigh and shoulder.
- (g) *Start up (MT)*.—Circular movement of the hand as if starting an engine.
- (h) *Mount (MT)*.—Two or three slight movements of the hand upward with the hand (palm uppermost).
- (j) *Slow down (MT)*.—The arm extended to the side level with the shoulder palm downwards, and moved slowly up and down with the wrist loose.
- (k) *Lie down or dismount (MT)*.—Two or three slight movements with the open hand towards the ground (palm downwards).
- (l) *As you were, or switch off (MT)*.—The arm extended downwards with the hand open, and waved across the body parallel to the ground.

CHAPTER VIII

PROTECTION

SECTION 46.—GENERAL

1. Every commander is responsible for the protection of his men. His protection is meant the steps which a commander takes to safeguard his command against being surprised in any form and to conceal his dispositions from the enemy.

2. No unit can be regarded as secure unless protection is furnished in all directions from which attack is possible whether from the front, the flanks, the rear or the air. Even when at a considerable distance from the enemy and when other troops are in front or to the flanks, units are liable to attack and should therefore always be ready to fight and protect themselves at short notice. Furthermore, protection from enemy agents, saboteurs and "fifth column" must always be maintained.

3. The conduct of advanced guards and rearguards are dealt with in other chapters of this pamphlet. The forms of protection considered here are :—

- (a) Protection at rest.
- (b) Anti-aircraft defence.
- (c) Defence against gas.

SECTION 47.—PROTECTION AT REST

Alarm posts

1. Whenever a platoon is halted for any length of time or when in a rest area, alarm posts must be allotted. They will be sited so as to meet ground attack from any direction and to give concealment from air observation. If necessary fire trenches will be dug, particularly if the halt is likely to be prolonged. All ranks must know where their alarm posts are and practice alarms will take place to ensure this.

Sentries

2. Sentries will always be posted for the local protection of any body of troops to give early warning of any attack and to check the identity of visitors or of suspicious persons loitering in the vicinity. A NCO will post sentries and ensure that they know their orders. They will be posted so as to cover the most likely approaches and must be within calling distance of the NCO on duty. By day single sentries will suffice, but they must always be doubled at night. When a sentry has to expose himself, for example to examine traffic

or personnel, he must be covered by another sentry who is concealed. The night sentry's tour of duty should not, if possible, exceed one hour and must never be more than two hours. Reliefs of night sentries should be staggered, so that one is always fresh. A NCO should be detailed in charge of reliefs. The duties of sentries and method of challenging are contained in Pamphlet No. 2—Fieldcraft.

Road blocks

3. Whenever a platoon is located in an area which is entered by roads or tracks along which enemy tanks and vehicles might approach a road block must be established. Often, a road block will consist of No. 75 grenades or anti-tank mines, but sometimes when mines are not available an improvised block consisting of material such as rubble, trees or farm carts filled with stone, must be constructed.

4. A road block should be sited so that it is difficult for crews of approaching AFVs or drivers of vehicles :—

- (a) To see the obstacle until they are close to it.
- (b) To turn the vehicle round.
- (c) To drive off the road and move across country.

Hence defiles where the road passes between woods, deep, wide ditches, thick hedges, banks or buildings are suitable. Surprise should be obtained by choosing a position round a corner where the block will be invisible until the vehicles are almost on top of it.

5. It may often be necessary to organize road blocks so that friendly vehicles can pass. These should be made of two overlapping portions. Concertina wire or some type of movable barrier should be used to fill the gap.

6. *A road block must always be covered by fire.*—One section with, if possible, the platoon anti-tank weapon is normally a sufficient garrison. The platoon anti-tank weapon (or light automatic) should be positioned so as to cover the road on the enemy's side, the remainder of the section being located to protect it and also to engage the enemy vehicles with fire from different angles.

7. Except in forward areas or when laying an ambush, a sentry should normally be stationed on the block itself to identify vehicles as either hostile or friendly and in the latter case to act as traffic policeman.

8. When mines or No. 75 grenades are used for a block another block or at least prominent notices, must be established on the rear side to prevent friendly vehicles from running over them.

SECTION 48.—ANTI-AIRCRAFT DEFENCE

General

1. Speed is the essence of all air attacks. A few seconds only will elapse between the first appearance of the aircraft and the end of the attack. The efficiency of the defence will therefore depend on :—

- (a) The speed at which warning of the attack can be given.
- (b) The quickness with which the warning can be followed by executive orders for movement or fire.
- (c) On the skill, steadiness, and fire discipline training of the troops.

2. Infantry protects itself against enemy aircraft by :—

- (a) Concealment.
- (b) The adoption of suitable formations (dispersion).
- (c) LMG fire.

Concealment and formations

3. On the line of march concealment is almost impossible, though casualties can be minimized by moving in single file on either side of the road. When moving in MT the necessity for maintaining the correct interval between vehicles is essential since with normal convoy densities low-flying aircraft must attack each vehicle separately. It is only when march discipline is relaxed and vehicles are allowed to close up that pilots are presented with an easy target.

4. When deployed it is best to adopt irregular formations in such small groups that the target, if observed, does not appear worth attacking. Troops should when possible keep in the shadow. In the open they should lie down, keep still and not look up.

5. At rest, or when occupying a defensive position, the careful siting of posts and the use of available cover or scrim netting should achieve concealment from the air. Unless every precaution has been taken to conceal positions from the air, and unless track discipline is of the highest order, positions will be located by the study of air photographs. These clearly show all tracks, even if only made by one man, and turned soil. Sentries must ensure that troops only use old tracks or covered approaches and avoid making new ones in the open. If the making of new tracks is unavoidable, they must be continued through and beyond the position. All earth turned by the digging of trenches, latrines, etc, must be disposed of under cover. Efforts should also be made to conceal the smoke of cooking.

6. In low level attacks, surprise is a factor which aircraft will try to achieve by the direction of their attack and the concealment of their approach. Observation is therefore of primary importance. Air sentries should be posted in the most suitable positions to give the

earliest possible warning of the approach of enemy aircraft. The signal is a succession of short blasts on the whistle, but since this may be inaudible sentries should also make a visual signal by holding both arms above the head and waving their arms. Air sentries must continually watch the sky, particularly in the direction of the sun or towards low hills, woods, etc. They must also listen for the approach of aircraft. The duties of air sentries are exhausting and entail great strain on the eyes. They should be relieved frequently.

Small arms fire

7. Small arms fire will only be opened by those LMG teams detailed for this role.

SECTION 49.—DEFENCE AGAINST GAS

1. Gas attacks can be made by :—

- (a) Aircraft bombs.
- (b) Aircraft spray.
- (c) Artillery shells.
- (d) Mortar bombs.
- (e) Rockets.
- (f) Chemical mines.

2. Protection against gas attack can only be achieved :—

- (a) By a high standard of anti-gas training.
- (b) By keeping up to scale and in good condition all anti-gas equipment.
- (c) When chemical warfare starts, by alertness.

3. Full details of the types of war gases and gas defence measures are contained in Gas Training, 1951.

CHAPTER IX

SCOUTS AND PATROLS

SECTION 50.—SCOUTS

General

1. When the platoon is deployed the section commander is responsible for his own protection. This can often be obtained by the use of suitable formations, if the enemy has been located and the ground in front is clear, but when the position of the enemy is unknown and the ground cannot be seen, scouts should be sent forward. It may sometimes be necessary to employ scouts on an exposed flank to guard against surprise.

Scouts should not be employed in such a way that they mask the fire of the section.

How scouts work

2. Scouts work in pairs. They move forward by bounds from one objective to another. When the objective for the next bound has been selected, one of the pair chooses his route to it and moves forward as rapidly as possible, while the other remains in observation. When the first scout reaches his objective, he signals the other to come forward. This having been done, the process is repeated. The reasons for this procedure are :—

- (a) The second scout is able to cover the advance of the leading scout with fire and to help him to withdraw if surprised by the enemy.
- (b) If the leading scout gets into difficulties, the other can inform the section commander in time for him to take the necessary action.

The aim of a scout is to see without being seen ; he should use his rifle only in self-defence or in defence of other men.

3. Bounds selected should be points which give a good view ahead and are suitable for signalling back to the section. The distance ahead that scouts move depends on the nature of the country. A short distance in open country is useless unless they are able to see more than the section commander can. Section commanders must maintain strict control over the movements of their scouts. Should they wish to give fresh orders they must signal to their scouts to halt and then move up to them.

4. Scouts may often locate gaps in the enemy's position and so enable the section to infiltrate between hostile posts.

They can be employed by reserve sections to report on the positions of the forward units.

SECTION 51.—TYPES OF PATROL

1. A patrol must be strong enough to do the task assigned to it but small enough to be controlled by one man.

There are two main types of patrol :—

- (a) Reconnaissance patrols.
 - (b) Fighting patrols.
- Other types include :—
- (c) Escort patrols.
 - (d) Standing patrols.

Most patrols are sent out at night, but daylight patrols are often necessary. Alternatively patrols may be despatched at night to " lie-up " during the day, returning again the following night.

Reconnaissance patrols

2. Reconnaissance patrols are employed to gain information about enemy defences and dispositions, and about ground obstacles. Such patrols will try to avoid contact with the enemy, since it is obviously better for them to achieve their task without disclosing their presence.

3. Reconnaissance patrols consist of a patrol leader, usually an officer, and his escort of one or two men. The patrol leader obtains the information, the primary task of the escort being to protect him.

Fighting patrols

4. There are some tasks, such as the capture of a prisoner, the harassing of the enemy, and the denial of information to him, which can only be carried out by fighting. Hence the need for stronger patrols, known as fighting patrols. The leader of the fighting patrol may often have to take out a reconnaissance patrol first in order to gain the information necessary for him to carry out his task.

5. Fighting patrols normally consist of between eight men and a whole platoon.

Escort patrols

6. Technical information is sometimes required on such subjects as mines, water obstacles, and "going" for AFVs. This information can only be obtained by specialists such as RAC or RE officers, who must be protected while on their reconnaissance. The task of escort patrols is to provide such protection. A further possible role is the protection of forward artillery observation posts.

7. The normal strength of an escort patrol will be one section.

Standing patrols

8. A standing patrol, usually consisting of one section, is sent out to watch approaches which the enemy is expected to use; for example such places as fords, bridges, road junctions or likely enemy forming-up places. Sometimes, particularly in close country where visibility is limited, a standing patrol may be sent out to give early warning of enemy movement or it may occupy a prominent point which an enemy must capture as a preliminary to an attack or may wish to use as a view-point.

9. The difference between a standing patrol and a defensive post is that the latter must fight in its position to the last unless otherwise ordered, whereas a standing patrol may change its position or withdraw if forced to do so by the enemy.

SECTION 52.—PREPARATIONS FOR A PATROL

What the patrol commander must know

1. The patrol commander must be given the following instructions. If any of the points are not covered he must ask about them:—
 - (a) The aim of the patrol. In the case of a reconnaissance patrol this will usually be in the form of a question, *eg*, "Is there an enemy post at the track junction 573456?"
 - (b) Information about the enemy in the area, and about ground.
 - (c) Details of the disposition of our forward troops and of other patrols going out.
 - (d) Details of harassing tasks to be fired by our artillery or mortars while the patrol is out.
 - (e) Any limitations affecting his choice of route.
 - (f) The time by which he must re-enter our positions.
 - (g) Whether our own forward troops and FOOs have been informed of the time, and routes out and in, of the patrol.
 - (h) The pass-word, if there is one.
 - (j) Action to be taken on encountering enemy on way to objective.

Composition of the patrol

2. Having received his instructions the patrol commander must next decide how many and which men are going on the patrol. There may be in the platoon some men totally unsuited for patrolling (if only because they have bad colds and would make too much noise) or the patrol may have been given some particularly important task which demands a picked team of expert and reliable men. To this extent the patrol commander will probably be allowed to select his men: but patrolling is not a specialist job, and as far as possible every man in the platoon should do his fair share.

3. The strength of the patrol will depend on its tasks, but will be governed also by the need for control. It should be remembered that at night it will be extremely difficult for the patrol leader to control more than 10 men when operating close to the enemy. It is sometimes necessary, however, to take a larger number, particularly if a firm base is to be established (see para 6 below).

Warning order

4. Having chosen his men, the patrol commander must issue a warning order which should say whether there is to be a rehearsal, and give details of dress and equipment. He must also arrange for the men to be rested and ensure that they will get food before going out.

Reconnaissance and plan

5. To make his detailed plan, the patrol commander should study air photos and previous patrol reports, in conjunction with large scale maps. Then he should view the ground from some OP. Obstacles should be studied, landmarks noted, an exact route "out" and "in" decided on, and notes made of bearings and distances. The route should, within any limitations which have been laid down, avoid obvious landmarks such as tracks and hedges, since they may be mined or covered by fixed lines. Routes followed by previous patrols should be avoided for fear of ambushes. For the same reason, the route in should be different from the route out. In general, a day patrol should keep to the high ground for good observation, and a night patrol to low ground for good observation and concealment. For some patrols arrangements will be necessary for pre-arranged fire support.

6. For long-range patrols, and for some fighting patrols, it may be wise to establish a firm base in no-mans-land from which a smaller patrol can be sent out.

7. For some night patrols, particularly when the task is to capture a prisoner from an enemy post, a rally or RV should be arranged at a safe distance from the scene of the raid, at which the patrol will re-form before returning. A firm base, if established, would make a suitable rallying point.

Weapons, dress, and equipment for night patrols

8. The weapons and equipment to be taken and the dress to be worn on night patrols will depend on the following consideration:—

(a) *Weapons*.—It is best to take light, short-range weapons. Machine carbines, particularly if fitted with a silencing device, rifles and bayonets, pistols and unconventional weapons such as knives and "life-preservers" are all suitable. The light automatic is rather heavy, but may be useful for escort patrols or fighting patrols with a harassing task, or if a firm base is to be established. HE grenades should be issued sparingly to night patrols, since indiscriminate grenade throwing may be dangerous and the flash may temporarily blind members of the patrol.

(b) *Dress*.—Rubber-soled boots should be worn if available. Steel helmets should not be worn since they make too much noise.

(c) *Equipment*.—This should be kept as light as possible. The patrol commander should take his binoculars, a compass, and some morphia in case anyone is wounded. A pair of wirecutters should be taken, but they must be well oiled. A blanket is useful for carrying a wounded man or for muffling a prisoner.

Patrol commander's orders

9. Every member of the patrol should be so thoroughly briefed that he can take charge in an emergency, or even complete the task on his own should the need arise. Orders should be issued with the aid of either a rough model made of earth, or of diagrams. Each member of the patrol should be given the opportunity of studying the available air photos. The orders should be given out very slowly, the members of the patrol being allowed to ask questions as the various points arise.

10. In addition to all applicable information of the enemy or our own troops the orders should include:—

(a) *The task of the patrol*.—This must be most carefully explained. On no account should the men be allowed to get the impression that they are patrolling for patrolling's sake.

(b) *Ground*.—Notes on landmarks and obstacles.

(c) *Method*.—This should include the task of each man, the route, both out and in, and the speed of movement. Any special control signals should be described. The action to be taken at a halt, the action to be taken if flares are encountered, the method of crossing obstacles, the action on meeting the enemy, and any orders about fire control, including the throwing of grenades, must be included.

(d) *Administration*.—Details of weapons, clothing and equipment. Arrangements for dealing with wounded, and escorts for prisoners.

(e) *Intercommunication*.—Times out and in, and password, if any.

(f) *Programme for the rest of the day*.—Times for rehearsal, testing of weapons, rest and food, and the viewing of the ground by members of the patrol.

Rehearsal, testing of weapons and viewing of ground

11. In the case of night fighting patrols, a daylight rehearsal should be held to practise the following:—

(a) Formations.

(b) Obstacle crossing.

(c) Action on meeting the enemy.

(d) Protective measures while halted.

12. All members of a night patrol should, if possible, be given the opportunity of seeing the ground first by day from an OP.

Final inspection

13. Before setting out, the patrol commander must carry out a final inspection to ensure that the men are properly equipped and

that, in the case of a night patrol, their equipment and weapons do not rattle. No one must carry anything that might give away valuable information should it fall into enemy hands. The men must be correctly camouflaged.

SECTION 53.—CONDUCT OF PATROLS

Formations

1. The formation adopted by a patrol will depend on :—

- (a) Concealment.
- (b) Control.
- (c) Protection.
- (d) Ground.

2. The exact formation adopted will also be affected by the size of the patrol and the individual preferences of the patrol leader. It should however be as simple as possible. In the case of a night fighting patrol consisting of an officer and ten men, a suitable formation might be diamond, with the patrol commander leading and the second in command of the patrol at the rear.

Movement

3. A *fighting patrol* should get as close as possible to its objective without being discovered, then carry out its task and withdraw as swiftly as possible. By night it should advance slowly and silently, halting frequently to listen and check direction. Whenever the patrol halts, each man should face outwards away from the centre of the patrol so that all-round observation is maintained throughout.

4. "Get-away" men should be detailed whose duty is to break-away if the patrol is ambushed and bring back the information which has been obtained. "Get-away" men will only function after the patrol has accomplished its task.

5. Once a fighting patrol has encountered the enemy, the need for stealth disappears. Noise has a distinct effect on morale and the side which shoots first has great moral advantage.

6. A *reconnaissance patrol* should work as silently as possible and use every device of fieldcraft to avoid being discovered while carrying out its task.

7. An *escort patrol* differs from a reconnaissance patrol in that it is not itself looking for information but the system on which it works will be similar, since it must avoid drawing attention to the activities of those it is escorting. If it is attacked it must ensure that, if possible, the specialists which it is protecting, can complete their task and that, in any event, it secures their safe return.

8. A *standing patrol* will move to its position in the same way as any other patrol, concealment and all-round protection being the main consideration.

9. In selecting his position the patrol commander must bear in mind the following points :—

- (a) In order to avoid the enemy approaching unseen and the patrol being cut off, the position should, if possible, be selected with no covered approach from the front or on the flanks.
- (b) A covered line of withdrawal should be available.
- (c) The position should have a long field of fire to prevent the enemy getting to close quarters.

10. On reaching its position the patrol should be carefully concealed, fire positions selected and arrangements made for continuous observation by sentries who must be close enough to the patrol to give the alarm on the approach of the enemy.

11. The patrol should, if possible, be in touch with the platoon by wireless or telephone and must send in reports at regular intervals.

Miscellaneous points

12. Some miscellaneous points on the conduct of patrols are :—

- (a) If a hedge must be followed for direction, it is best to walk parallel to it and not along it, owing to the danger of mines and of fire on fixed lines.
- (b) Enemy dead and wounded should be searched for letters, pay-books, etc., and their shoulder titles and caps removed and brought back.
- (c) A patrol leader should never leave a patrol himself nor should he send out one man alone.
- (d) Crawling is tiring and places a man at a great disadvantage if surprised. Whenever possible the patrol should move at a slow walk.
- (e) Precautions must never be relaxed when withdrawing a patrol. The information obtained must be brought back.
- (f) Day patrols will move by bounds from one point of observation to another. Part of the patrol should always be in a position to give immediate fire support if necessary.
- (g) Before a night patrol the men's eyes must be given time to become adapted to the dark. They should not be exposed to a bright light for at least 15 minutes before going out.

CHAPTER X THE ATTACK

SECTION 54.—PRELIMINARIES

Equipment Scale

1. The equipment carried within the platoon is given in a table in Chapter I—Organization. From this can be worked out a standard scale of equipment to be carried in the attack which may, of course, be varied for each operation.

2. Although nothing can absolve the platoon commander from his overall responsibility, the task of supervising that the weapon and equipment scale as ordered is correct, is normally carried out by the platoon sergeant. He will detail men for the platoon anti-tank weapon, if allotted, and will check every item, while the platoon commander is making his reconnaissance.

SECTION 55.—ASSEMBLY AREA

In the assembly area, the battalion will organize and regroup for the operation; and, if it has not been possible to do so beforehand, platoon and section commanders will make contact with their opposite numbers of supporting arms such as tanks, armoured personnel carriers, anti-tank guns, and flame-throwers, which may be supporting them. The platoon 88 set will here be checked on the company net.

SECTION 56.—FORMING-UP PLACE

From the assembly area troops move to the forming-up place (FUP) and deploy into battle formation before crossing the start line (SL). This period in the FUP will be short. The platoon commander will here make certain that he is in his proper place in relation to his supporting tanks, etc.

SECTION 57.—START LINE

The SL is the line the assaulting troops cross, generally at a specified time, and should be out of view of the enemy. It should be square to the objective, and follows some well defined feature. It is undesirable to pause on this line, and it must be crossed punctually as the artillery fire plan will be based on this timing (H hour).

SECTION 58.—THE FIRE PLAN

1. Fire support to cover the advance of the platoon during the attack may be provided in one of three ways.

- (a) Pre-arranged support in accordance with the battalion plan.

- (b) Additional outside support, which can be made available on call during the attack.
- (c) Fire from the platoon's own weapons.

2. Pre-arranged support will vary from large-scale artillery bombardment and assistance from the RAF down to covering fire arranged with other platoons. It is most important when the artillery support is in the form of a barrage that the platoon commander should plan to keep as close to it as possible, normally about 80 yards behind. He will then be able to close up with the enemy before the effect of the artillery fire has ceased and the enemy is able to man his weapons.

3. When fire support is by concentrations on known enemy positions, the same rules apply. The riflemen must follow up as quickly as possible. If smoke is being used, troops must not get silhouetted by letting the smoke get behind them.

4. During the assault, artillery forward observation officers (FOOs) and mobile fire controllers (MFCs) will advance with the leading companies and can bring down fire on call against unexpected opposition, or adjust the fire according to the situation.

SECTION 59.—REORGANIZATION

1. Directly the objective is captured, the enemy will probably react strongly by counter-attack and bombardment. It is therefore essential for a plan for the reorganization phase to be made before the attack. Approximate section areas and fire tasks will be pointed out, the question of concealment being also considered, and some indication given as to what support can be expected from tanks and anti-tank guns. Patrols and sentries will be organized to prevent surprise by the enemy. Artillery and mortar DF tasks must be known. The reorganization can be divided into four phases:—

- (a) Adopting positions for all-round defence and digging in, or converting enemy trenches. Posting of sentries and sending out of patrols to watch a likely enemy FUP. Concealment against air attack is of the greatest importance.
- (b) Assessment of casualties and ammunition. Reporting to platoon and company headquarters. Sending back prisoners.
- (c) The issue of additional orders according to the battalion instructions for improving the position.
- (d) Carrying out of these orders.

2. Thereafter the routine becomes the same as in defence.

SECTION 60.—PLATOON ORDERS

1. The following are notes on what should be included in platoon orders for the attack :—

Information

- (a) *Enemy*.—Information about known or suspected enemy posts and anti-tank guns.
- (b) *Own troops*.—A very brief outline of the battalion and company plan with the position of their HQ and, in the case of a platoon operating on the flank of the battalion, of the plan of the neighbouring unit. The other arms supporting the attack should be mentioned and it should be stated whether the artillery support is to take the form of concentrations, a barrage, smoke, or a combination of these.

Intention

- (c) A clear and simple statement of the platoon's task.

Method

- (d) FUP and SL.
- (e) Platoon formations.
- (f) Section objectives and tasks.
- (g) Rate of advance.
- (h) H hour.
- (j) Fire plan. Details of the fire plan of artillery, tanks and mortar platoon fire plan.
- (k) Reorganization. Section tasks and approximate positions on reaching the objective.

Administration

- (l) Any change in the normal "attack scale" of the platoon including the allotment of the platoon anti-tank weapon, if available, to one of the sections.
- (m) Where walking wounded are to go.

Intercommunication

- (n) Position of platoon headquarters during the assault and on reorganization.
- (o) Any special signals for pointing out targets to tanks, FOOs, and MFCs, and for indicating to them the progress of the infantry.
- (p) The success signal.
- (q) SS set channel in use.
- (r) Synchronize watches.

Questions

2. The above headings contain all or most of the points that must be included in orders for a deliberate attack. *In the quick attack, where the aim is to take advantage of the unpreparedness of the enemy, orders must be reduced to an absolute minimum and reliance placed more on battlecraft procedure than on laborious and detailed considerations of each and every possible contingency.*

SECTION 61.—SECTION ORDERS

Having received his orders and carried out his reconnaissance, the section commander will issue his orders to his section.

SECTION 62.—BRIEFING

It is desirable whenever time permits that the platoon commander should brief his men thoroughly, preferably with the help of a diagram or rough model made from earth. This is the best way of ensuring that, even if leaders are killed or wounded, the platoon will still reach its objective.

SECTION 63.—HANDLING THE PLATOON AND SECTION IN THE ASSAULT

1. The platoon must go into action absolutely certain of the objectives and knowing the plan of the attack as given in the method paragraph of the platoon commanders' orders. Once on the move it must not be stopped by anything less than really effective fire. To deal with spasmodic resistance during the advance, one Bren group should always be immediately ready to give covering fire. *It must be realized that to double forward and close with the enemy is the first duty of all assaulting troops.*

2. If an enemy post does succeed in stopping the advance, the commander must get his men moving again. Steps which he can take are :—

- (a) Locate the enemy post.
- (b) Use smoke or HE from the 2-inch mortar, or smoke grenades, and organize covering fire from the nearest Bren group to hand.
- (c) Report the situation on the SS set to the company commander requesting additional mortar/artillery support.
- (d) Use battlecraft measures indicated in the following sections. Even if the precise nature of the enemy post cannot be seen, fire brought down immediately on the approximate area will do more than anything else to get his platoon on the move again.

When the advance is resumed it will be especially necessary to use fire and movement, support being given by 2-inch mortar smoke and HE, and one section covering another with Bren and rifle fire. Any enemy by-passed during the advance must be mopped up by the rear section or reported to the company commander if this is not possible.

3. The section commander will have received his orders from the platoon commander and will understand the latter's intention and his own task. **Once the attack is started he must use his own initiative to get onto the objective.** It may be that his section is the only one that can get forward and by doing so he will probably loosen up opposition facing the rest of the platoon. He will ask for assistance from any tanks co-operating and must support other sections and platoons by fire as necessary.

4. Should his own section get held up he must use the weapons, especially the Bren, within his own section to advance by fire and movement. A smoke grenade will often allow him to get his men to a position where they can shoot at the enemy or where they can charge with the bayonet if close enough.

SECTION 64.—BATTLECRAFT FOR THE ATTACK—PRINCIPLES

1. In a large-scale attack in which supporting fire is provided from outside the platoon by artillery, mortars, and other weapons, it is essential to keep the platoon and section *moving forward* as close to this fire as possible. By so doing as has already been stated, the assaulting infantry will close with the enemy before he has recovered from the effects of the bombardment and before he has time to man his weapons.

2. However, unexpected opposition which has not been neutralized may at any time hold up the platoon; it will also be necessary for the platoon to fight its way forward by battlecraft covered by its own weapons and, after it has reached its objective, to fight through it using its own fire power.

3. The principles which must be observed are:—

- (a) *Covering fire.*—This is essential to any advance. Without it forward movement will often be impossible: the closer the section or platoon gets to the enemy the greater the need for covering fire.
- (b) *Axis of the attack.*—In order to get the fullest advantage of covering fire from within the platoon the ideal is for the attack to go in at right angles to the covering fire. It must be remembered, however, that this might well put the attacking sections in direct enfilade to other enemy positions in depth. The exposed flank of the assaulting sections should be covered by the light machine gun of the outer assault section (see Fig 10).

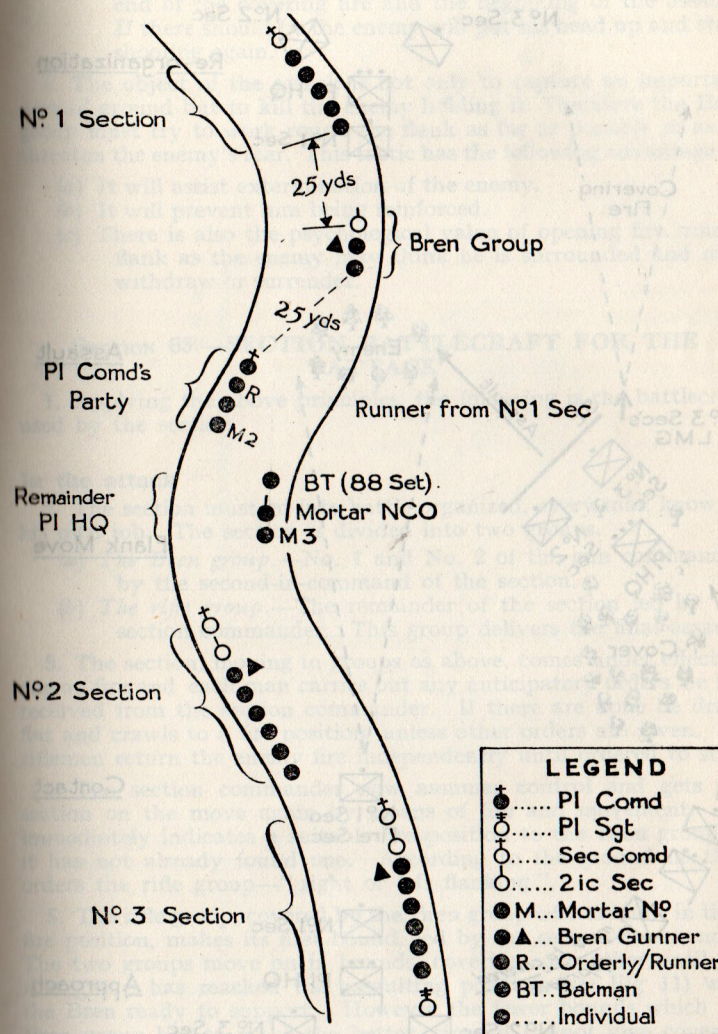


FIG 9.—Platoon moving down a road before contact

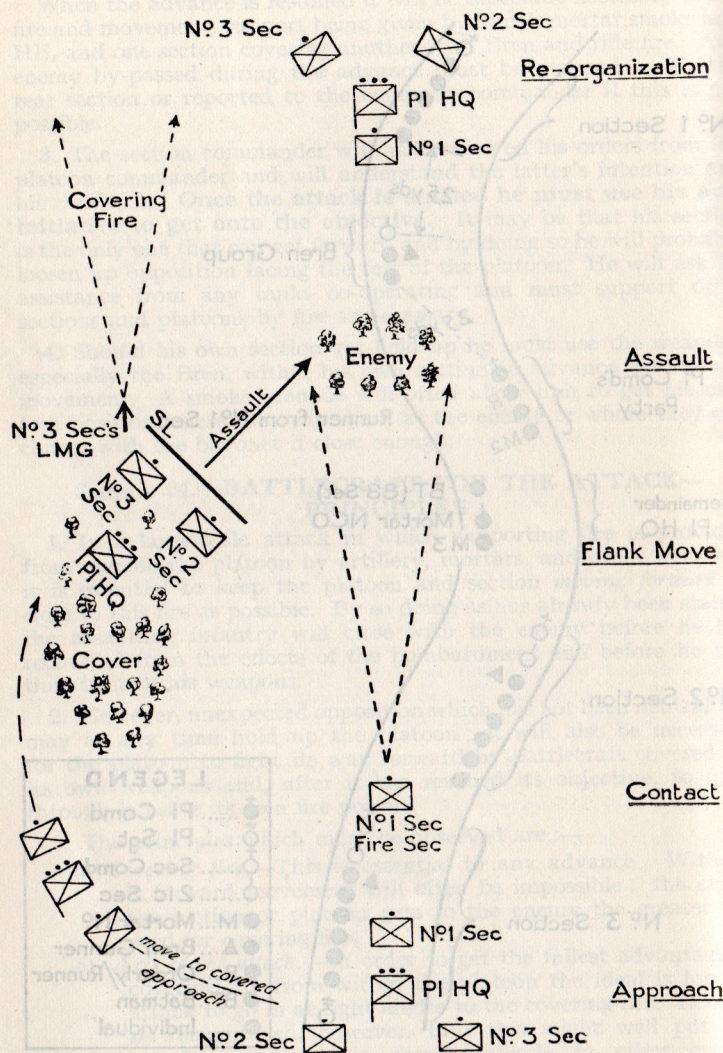


FIG 10.—Platoon flanking movement

(c) *Timing the assault.*—There must be no interval between the end of the covering fire and the beginning of the assault. If there should be the enemy will put his head up and start shooting again.

4. The object of the attack is not only to capture an important area of ground but to kill the enemy holding it. Therefore the Bren group must try to work round the flank as far as possible so as to threaten the enemy's rear. This tactic has the following advantage:—

- It will assist extermination of the enemy.
- It will prevent him being reinforced.
- There is also the psychological value of opening fire from a flank as the enemy may think he is surrounded and may withdraw or surrender.

SECTION 65.—SECTION BATTLECRAFT FOR THE ATTACK

1. Applying the above principles, the following is the battlecraft used by the section.

In the attack

2. The section must go into battle organized, every man knowing his own job. The section is divided into two groups.

- The Bren group.*—No. 1 and No. 2 of the gun commanded by the second-in-command of the section.
- The rifle group.*—The remainder of the section led by the section commander. This group delivers the final assault.

3. The section, moving in groups as above, comes under effective enemy fire and each man carries out any anticipatory orders he has received from the section commander. If there are none he drops flat and crawls to a fire position, unless other orders are given. All riflemen return the enemy fire independently until ordered to stop.

4. The section commander now assumes control and gets the section on the move again by means of fire and movement. He immediately indicates a suitable fire position to the Bren group, if it has not already found one. According to the ground he then orders the rifle group—"right or left flanking".

5. The rifle group, covered by the Bren group who are now in their fire position, makes its first bound, led by the section commander. The two groups move on in bounds, covering each other until the rifle group has reached the assaulting position (see Fig 11) with the Bren ready to support. However the fewer bounds which the Bren group has to make the better, since it cannot give covering fire while on the move and also runs an increased risk of being located by the enemy.

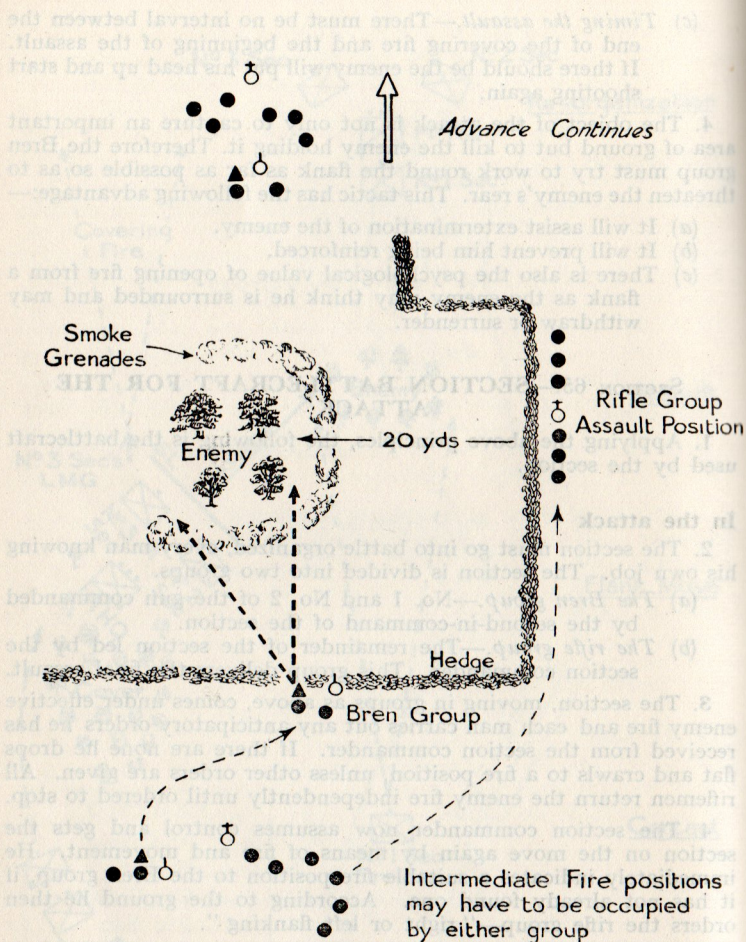


FIG 11.—Section flanking movement

6. The assault goes in, helped by smoke grenades if necessary. This method ensures logical and orderly action from the moment the section is first fired on; it ensures control by the section commander at a vital period.

There must be no hesitation or the section commander will temporarily lose control.

Points to note

7. (a) One group will always cover the move of the other by fire.
- (b) Having the Bren at an angle of 90 degrees to the assault enables it to give covering fire up to the last moment of the assault.
- (c) Groups should be within voice control. When this is not possible intercommunication can be achieved by:—
 - (i) *Noise of firing.*—The opening of fire by one group tells the other it is time to move on.
 - (ii) *Visual signals, eg,* one man of the rifle group can crawl to a position from which he can observe and wave on the Bren group.
 - (iii) *Team work.*—Careful observation and practice will lead to an almost instinctive movement as a result of intelligent anticipation.
 - (iv) *Voice control.*—Section commander can speak to the second-in-command as one group bounds behind the other. This opportunity can also be taken to collect magazines, if additional ammunition is required for the Bren group.
 - (v) Use a runner only in an emergency and all else has failed and something has definitely gone wrong.
- (d) The Bren group must know the assault position as soon as it has been chosen.

The assault

8. (a) On orders from the section commander the rifle group assaults firing from the hip. He will control from the centre.
- (b) As soon as the position is overrun the rifle group resumes the original line of advance and will reorganize at least 50 yards beyond the enemy post.
- (c) The Bren group is called up.
- (d) The section commander checks casualties and re-distributes ammunition.
- (e) The advance continues.

Points to note

9. (a) Smoke grenades may be very useful in the assault. Being instantaneous, they give off smoke at just the right moment to cover the last phase of the attack.
- (b) The section must not stay in the area of the captured enemy position or they will be shelled and mortared. If ordered to remain they must dig in immediately.

SECTION 66.—PLATOON BATTLECRAFT FOR THE ATTACK

1. Having mastered the section battlecraft, sections will be ready to work as a platoon.
 - (a) The platoon advances in the correct order with the point section leading, a tactical bound ahead.
 - (b) When the point section comes under effective fire it will act as already described in Section 65 and will try to get on alone. If it is unable to do so, or the platoon commander has already decided to attack with the platoon, the leading section stops and becomes the fire section, which will cover the advance of the other two sections. The platoon commander will give the fire section commander his outline plan for the attack.
 - (c) The platoon commander finds an OP and sends for his "O" group, making his reconnaissance, appreciation and plan while the "O" group is coming up.
 - (d) The platoon commander then issues brief orders, dealing only with essentials.

Points to note

2. (a) The platoon commander must choose a viewpoint not too near the leading section and take every care that the "O" group is not seen by the enemy.
- (b) He will try to avoid the obvious covered approach; the enemy will be watching it.
- (c) The 2-inch mortar is very important as it can be used for the HE or smoke support in case of trouble. It should be under the hand of the platoon commander who normally will move behind the leading flanking section, which will move by bounds.
- (d) If the platoon attack is not strong enough to overcome the enemy the company commander must take over the attack. By trying to advance the attacking platoon will have gained valuable information about the enemy position by forcing their posts to open fire.

The flanking movement

3. If, while trying to outflank the original enemy position as described above, the platoon comes under effective fire from other enemy posts, the platoon commander must maintain his original objective, detaching as small a portion of his force as possible to counter this fire.

4. If the opposition comes from a flank, the Bren group of the leading flanking section will move into a position from which it can engage this target. The remainder of the section will push on towards the first objective. If the flank enemy fire is intense the platoon commander may use the Bren group of the third section also.

5. If opposition is really severe, smoke from the 2-inch mortar can be used to screen the enemy position. This might be done by the platoon sergeant without waiting for orders.

Opposition from the area of the covered approach

6. The section advancing up the covered approach given by the platoon commander may meet fire from an unseen post or an enemy patrol with a LMG.

As soon as effective enemy fire comes down, all the flanking party should go to ground, the riflemen of the leading section returning the enemy fire. The platoon commander must try then to force a passage down the covered approach towards the original enemy position. Here the 2-inch mortar HE bomb can be used and immediate orders issued to deal with the situation.

The platoon commander should not attempt a wide encircling movement in the open outside the covered approach. To do so would expose his men to severe enfilade fire from other mutually supporting enemy posts.

SECTION 67.—CO-OPERATION WITH TANKS

1. The squadron or regiment of tanks supporting the battalion will have established liaison with the assaulting infantry in the assembly area and the platoon should know full details of the type of tank allotted to them, its capabilities, the tank commander's name and especially how to recognize and communicate with them, including the netting of wireless sets. A platoon normally works with a troop of four tanks and the closest liaison between the platoon and troop commanders is essential. Tanks and infantry will usually move to the FUP on separate routes and it is necessary for the platoon to join up with its allotted troop with the minimum of delay and confusion.

2. Support between the infantry and tanks is mutual. The tanks can destroy enemy machine guns and strong points but are vulnerable to short-range anti-tank weapons which it is likely the riflemen will have to hunt out and destroy.

Tanks are very blind when closed down and cannot hear small arms fire, so it will usually be necessary therefore for enemy posts which are holding up the platoon to be indicated to the tanks before they can shoot at them. This can be done on the 88 set, which will have a channel on the tank net, by firing tracer, 2-inch mortar smoke and by personal indication of the target to tank gunners or through the telephone on the back of each tank.

3. As tanks will draw fire, the sections should not deploy too near them. Whether tanks or infantry will lead will depend on the type of country and opposition, and can seldom be laid down in advance, but when following up the normal field artillery barrage the tanks can advance right in the middle of it, and can therefore go ahead of the infantry.

If tanks come up against an unexpected minefield they will be unable to advance until it has been cleared and the infantry will have to go on alone, with the tanks giving supporting fire as best they can.

4. The infantry can be carried on tanks up to but not into the battle, and they will usually dismount before the tanks deploy. A squadron of tanks can carry a company, a troop a platoon, and one tank a section. A troop carries a platoon as follows :—

Tank No. 1 (Troop Comd) ...	...	...	Platoon HQ
Tank No. 2 ...	...	...	No. 1 Sec
Tank No. 3 ...	...	...	No. 2 Sec
Tank No. 4 ...	...	...	No. 3 Sec

An NCO on each tank must see that the men keep awake as the exhaust fumes produce drowsiness, and it is dangerous for the men to hang their legs over the sides as they may be crushed against trees or walls. Control of the platoon can still be maintained by the use of the troop commander's wireless net, as there is a set in each tank.

Much practice is necessary, as the mounting of tanks will often be done in darkness.

SECTION 68.—NIGHT ATTACKS

General

1. A skilled enemy can construct defensive positions of great strength in a short time. It will therefore frequently be necessary to attack by night when aimed defensive fire is impossible and surprise easier to achieve. However, control is difficult and the

effectiveness of supporting fire from artillery, and especially from tanks is much reduced. Factors which make for success are :—

- (a) Simplicity of plan.
- (b) Thorough reconnaissance.
- (c) Detailed preparations.

2. The two main types of night attack are known as :—

- (a) *Noisy*.—Troops assault under cover of barrage, concentrations, etc.
- (b) *Silent*.—No fire support during the attack but available on call.

Both types require a high standard of infantry training and preliminary preparations.

Conduct of a night attack

3. The basic procedure at night is the same as by day with additional precautions to retain control and direction.

Action in the assembly area and FUP will be normal, but the platoon will pay particular attention to its equipment and its fitting to reduce noise and obtain lightness for ease of movement. It will be necessary to carry tools and sandbags for reorganization exactly as by day.

The FUP and the routes to it should be marked by tapes or lamps by specially detailed men and regimental police under supervision of the intelligence officer. Some guides from the company will usually be necessary to lead platoons to their exact forming-up positions.

The start line itself must also be clearly marked and troops will cross this at H hour in their planned formations, which will often be file or single file for ease of control, with assault formations being adopted close to the objective.

In order to maintain direction and formation, troops will advance within sight of flanking sub-units, *ie*, No. 1 platoon will keep in touch with its flanking platoon and No. 1 section with its flanking or preceding section.

Aids to direction keeping are compass bearings, pace checkers, the firing of tracer down lines of advance by LAA guns, artificial moonlight, location of prominent landmarks, and, of course, the phase of the moon selected for the date of the attack.

Rate of advance will depend on the degree of darkness, obstacles, and the state of the ground, but 100 yards in six minutes can be taken as an average guide.

Men must move at a steady pace and action to be taken in the case of enemy flares, star shells, etc, will be laid down previously. On reaching the assaulting position, the more noise of firing and shouting the better, as it gives the enemy a disproportionate idea as to the strength of the attackers and helps the morale of the attackers themselves; in the final assault the bayonet can be used to great effect.

Reorganization after a night attack

4. This is the most difficult part of the operation as it will have to be undertaken generally in darkness so that the position is ready to be defended against the almost certain enemy counter-attack at first light.

5. The plan for reorganization on the objective will have been given out in the orders for the attack and the method will be the same as by day, but the confusion resulting immediately on arrival on the objective at night makes the task of rapid and co-ordinated defence extremely difficult. In the darkness there will be a tendency for sections to lay out their positions too close together, *eg*, No. 1 section might dig in only 5 yards from No. 2 or even immediately behind or in front of it. This can only be avoided by careful liaison between section commanders, and thorough co-ordination by the platoon commander.

6. Careful preparation and good training will help to overcome these difficulties; some points which may be mentioned are:—

- (a) Communications from platoon to company headquarters should be duplicated.
- (b) Every commander should have an understudy.
- (c) The platoon commander must be forward on the objective immediately to co-ordinate the reorganization of his sections and make sure that no enemy are sitting up close to his positions.
- (d) Careful study of maps and air photographs before the attack will make it possible to choose reorganization positions beforehand.
- (e) Platoon and section commanders must know the rearranged artillery and mortar DF and DF (SOS) tasks and who can call for them.
- (f) Re-adjustments must be made at first light if found necessary.
- (g) Anti-tank guns which have come up during darkness must be adequately protected in their platoon localities.
- (h) Control and security will be better secured if close formations, such as file, are adopted while moving forward, deploying into line for the final assault.

SECTION 69.—THE USE OF ARMoured PERSONNEL CARRIERS

1. The armoured personnel carrier (APC) will often be used in the deliberate attack against strong opposition to enable infantry to be carried straight to the assault from the assembly area, or even further back, thus avoiding casualties in the FUP and SL and arriving fresh and fit for battle. APCs may on occasions take troops right on to the objective.

A troop of APCs will lift a platoon and each personnel carrier will take a section and has its own wireless set.

2. Troops will be trained to mount and dismount quickly as this may have to be done under enemy fire. The platoon headquarters will be split, the platoon commander and platoon sergeant travelling in separate APCs.

3. On the way to the assault area, platoon and section commanders must keep a constant look-out for their bearings so that they always know where they are on the ground in relation to their objective. If an APC is knocked out or breaks down, personnel concerned will go forward on foot.

SECTION 70.—ATTACKING STRONG POINTS

General

1. In an attack on a prepared position, pill-boxes, concrete emplacements and fortified dug-outs, and bunkers will be met. They will usually be sited so as to be mutually supported by fire from each other and from the surrounding fire trenches. They will often be protected by wire and mines. The rifle platoon will have to deal with such places, though usually with support from tanks or AVREs or flame throwers, and sometimes aircraft. On occasions, however, less formidable types of pill-boxes will have to be taken by the platoon with its own weapons, using smoke and HE grenades and platoon anti-tank weapons, but against a strong position, an assaulting team of sappers and infantry is necessary, and the attack will often have to be made at night.

2. Against a mutually supporting series of fortifications a simultaneous attack on each separately will give the best chance of success, as their fire will become confused and the enemy will not be able to rush up reinforcements to stop a gap so easily. The rifle platoon, however, cannot take on more than one emplacement at a time.

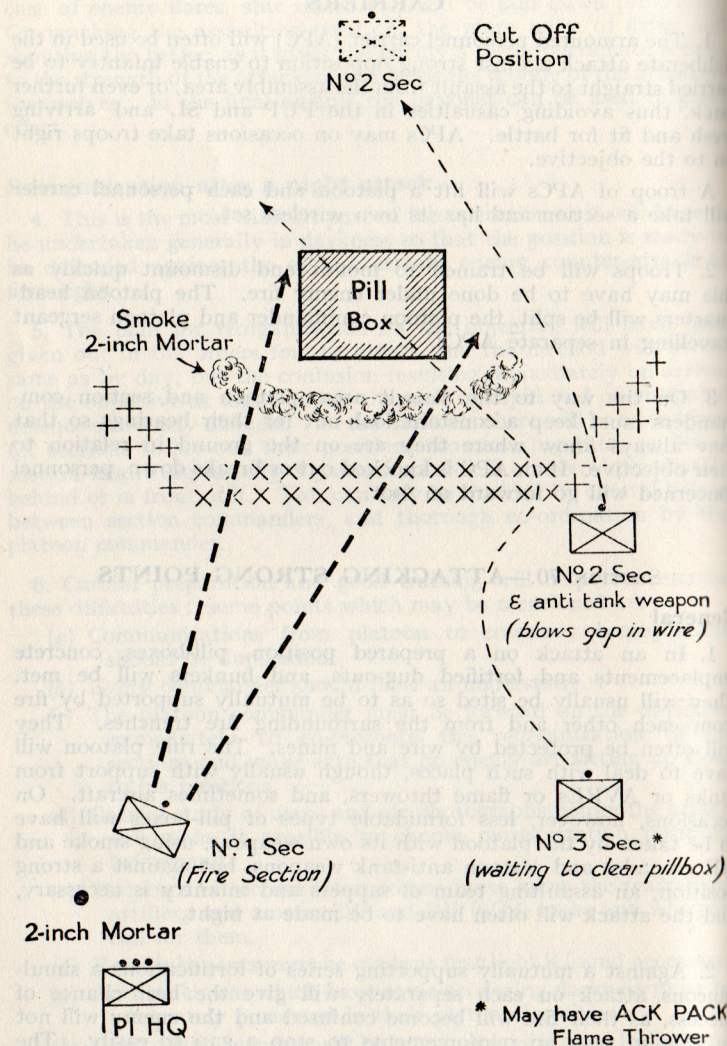


FIG 12.—Platoon attacking a pill-box.

3. A deliberate operation, implying time for thorough reconnaissance, training, and rehearsal can be undertaken by one platoon against one pill-box. A possible organization of the attacking team is as follows (see Fig 12).

No. 1 Section and platoon HQ—Fire section.

No. 2 Section (with platoon anti-tank weapon)—Bangalore torpedo and cut-off section.

No. 3 Section (with smoke and HE grenades)—Pill-box clearing section.

A minimum of four sappers or pioneers should be added to No. 2 section to operate the bangalore torpedo and pole-charges.

4. A possible method of attack is :—

(a) The fire section opens heavy fire on the loop-holes, the 2-inch mortar putting down smoke.

(b) No. 2 section and pioneers move at a wide angle, if possible, so that they get the fullest support from the fire section, with the platoon anti-tank weapon going further to a flank to be used against the pill-box. The pioneers place the bangalore torpedoes in the wire, light the fuses and withdraw.

(c) On the blowing of the wire No. 2 section rushes through the gap and takes up position beyond the pill-box, killing any enemy in trenches outside it. Pioneers follow, place the pole-charges against the pill-box and join No. 2 section.

Any anti-personnel mines in the gap should have been destroyed by the bangalores.

(d) When the pole-charges go off, No. 3 section clear the pill-box with grenades thrown through the loop-holes. If it has a steel door this may have to be blown later by other sappers, and usually captured pill-boxes will have to be destroyed completely to prevent the enemy infiltrating back and re-occupying them. This will be entirely a sapper task.

5. The use of flame against strong points can be extremely effective. It has a great moral effect and the threat of its use may even induce the enemy to leave a pill-box or emplacement before any attack on it is launched. This equipment is of three types :—

(a) The Ack-Pack (man carried) range 30 to 50 yards.

(b) The Wasp (carrier) 60 to 80 yards.

(c) The Crocodile (tank) 80 to 120 yards.

The main problem owing to the short range of the flame, is to bring the equipment within the range of the strong point and therefore covering fire, smoke and concealed approaches are necessary.

The rifle platoon will be responsible for the protection of any flame equipment working with it.

CHAPTER XI

DEFENCE

SECTION 71.—DEFINITIONS

The following terms will be used in defensive operations :—

- (a) *Defended post*.—The position held by a section. Posts are grouped together in mutual support to form a defended locality.
- (b) *Defended locality*.—An area of ground organized for all-round defence, eg, a platoon or company locality. The general line of the foremost localities will be known as the line of the FDLs.
- (c) *Defended area*.—An area of operational responsibility containing a group of localities organized in depth, eg, a battalion area.
- (d) *Defensive fire (DF)*.—Pre-arranged fire which can be brought down quickly in depth on the front of actual or suspected attack. It will include :—
 - (i) Tasks close in front of the FDLs with the aim of breaking up the leading waves.
 - (ii) Tasks in depth with the aim of disorganizing the enemy's movement of reserves.
- (e) *Defensive fire (SOS)*. Areas of DF on which guns, mortars and other weapons are kept laid when they are not engaged on other shoots. Fire will be brought down immediately on the front concerned in reply to the SOS signal.

SECTION 72.—GENERAL

1. The main aim of infantry in defence is to defeat the enemy's attack by fire.
2. Behind the FDLs, fire is organized in depth to stop any of the enemy who may succeed in penetrating the positions.
3. The defended position will be strengthened by digging, wiring, and the use of anti-armoured fighting vehicle obstacles and mines.
4. The type of defences that can be constructed depends on the time available for the organization and occupation of the position. Defences will vary between a hasty occupation, when all that can be done is probably the improvement of natural cover, and the construction of a highly organized defensive position.

SECTION 73.—WHAT THE PLATOON AND SECTION COMMANDER MUST KNOW

1. *The enemy*.—Where he is, when attack is expected, and from what direction.
2. *Own troops*.—The neighbouring localities being occupied, and by whom ; whether any troops are out in front to cover the occupation of the position ; whether he is responsible for posting any sentries.
3. *What help is being given by other arms and by neighbouring platoons*.—In particular the ground which is being covered by the fire of artillery, or infantry supporting weapons.
4. *The task of the platoon*.—The position of his own and the other platoons, also position of company and platoon headquarters and anti-tank guns.
5. *Mines*.—The location of anti-personnel and anti-tank mines.
6. *The task of each section*.
7. *When fire is to be opened*.—Fire may be opened on some occasions as soon as the enemy comes within range, and on other occasions it may be withheld until the enemy is close, in order to gain surprise. The section commander should know what is intended. He should also be told the signal for defensive fire.
8. *What digging and wiring is to be done and the time by which the section is to be dug in and ready for action*.—The platoon commander must lay down what tasks are to be undertaken first. As a rule these include :—
 - (a) Digging weapon pits, and clearing the field of fire.
 - (b) Erecting wire.
9. *The types of section post that are to be constructed*.—In accordance with instructions of the company commander the platoon commander will issue orders as to whether :—
 - (a) The initial work will be limited to improving natural cover.
 - (b) Weapon pits only are to be dug, ie, if the position is not going to be held for a long period.
 - (c) Weapon pits are to be dug and connected up later into a trench system.
 - (d) The complete section trench is to be dug immediately.
10. *Patrols*.—When patrols are being sent out in the vicinity, the routes out and back, and the times of their departure and return.
11. *Tools*.—What tools have been allotted to the section, where they can be drawn and when.

SECTION 74.—RECONNAISSANCE

1. If the situation permits, the platoon commander should look at the ground from the enemy point of view, noting approaches likely to be used and considering how best to conceal his position from ground and air observation.

2. Before finally deciding on any section position, the platoon commander must lie down on the ground to make sure that the section can carry out its fire task from the place which he has selected. The siting of light machine guns is of paramount importance.

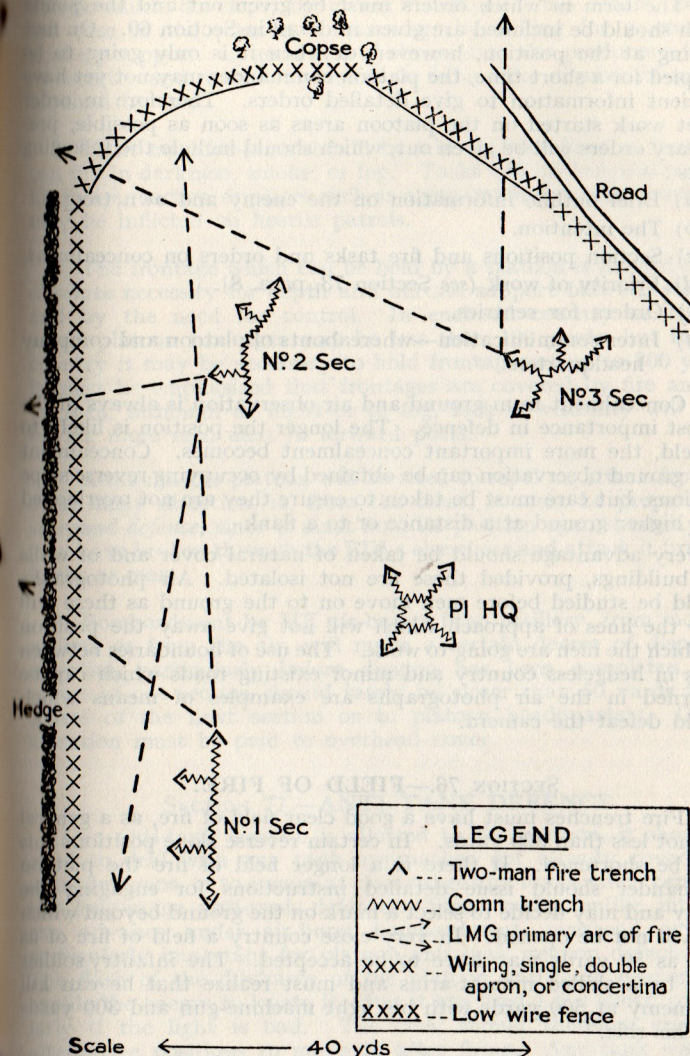
3. During his reconnaissance, the platoon commander should visit the commander of neighbouring platoons, anti-tank guns and tanks, so that commanders of infantry and supporting sub-units know where each others positions are, and so as to ensure that the whole front is covered by fire. Before going out on his reconnaissance, he should arrange for his own personal protection, and if his platoon is in rear he should send a runner to bring it to a forward rendezvous.

SECTION 75.—LAYOUT

1. In laying out his platoon area, the platoon commander will be guided by the instructions and information which he will receive from his company commander, and in addition will take into account the following factors :—

- The position must remain concealed from the enemy.
- Sections should be able to support each other.
- The maximum fire must be brought to bear on the most likely enemy approaches.
- Anti-tank guns must be protected by infantry.
- Any tank obstacles within the platoon area should be improved and covered by fire from section positions.
- The platoon must be capable of all-round defence.
- Sections posts should be within sight and voice control of platoon headquarters.
- The platoon must not be too concentrated, otherwise it will present a vulnerable target to bombardment, either by artillery or from the air.

These decided, the "O" Group will be called up and orders given for the occupation of the positions and the counter attack role rehearsed.



This layout suits the locality in question. Distances and positions will naturally vary with the type of country and shape of ground.

FIG 13.—Platoon defended locality.

2. The form in which orders must be given out and the points which should be included are given in detail in Section 60. On first arriving at the position, however, or when it is only going to be occupied for a short time, the platoon commander may not yet have sufficient information to give detailed orders. Therefore in order to get work started on the platoon areas as soon as possible, preliminary orders will be given out, which should include the following points :—

- (a) Brief outline information on the enemy and own troops.
- (b) The intention.
- (c) Section positions and fire tasks and orders on concealment.
- (d) Priority of work (*see* Section 73, para. 8).
- (e) Orders for sentries.
- (f) Inter-communication—whereabouts of platoon and company headquarters.

3. Concealment from ground and air observation is always of the utmost importance in defence. The longer the position is likely to be held, the more important concealment becomes. Concealment from ground observation can be obtained by occupying reverse slope positions, but care must be taken to ensure they are not overlooked from higher ground at a distance or to a flank.

Every advantage should be taken of natural cover and of walls and buildings, provided these are not isolated. Air photographs should be studied before men move on to the ground as these will show the lines of approach which will not give away the position on which the men are going to work. The use of boundaries between crops in hedgeless country and minor existing roads which can be discerned in the air photographs are examples of means which should defeat the camera.

SECTION 76.—FIELD OF FIRE.

1. Fire trenches must have a good clear field of fire, as a general rule not less than 300 yards. In certain reverse slope positions this may be shortened. If there is a longer field of fire the platoon commander should issue detailed instructions for engaging the enemy and may decide to select a mark on the ground beyond which fire will not be opened. In very close country a field of fire of as little as 50 yards may have to be accepted. The infantry soldier must be a skilled man-at-arms and must realize that he can kill the enemy at 500 yards with his light machine-gun and 300 yards with his rifle.

2. Although a very long field of fire is unnecessary, platoon and section commanders should, if possible, have observation at longer ranges. This will give them more time to prepare to meet any

attack which develops, by giving "delayed" fire orders, and, in the case of the platoon commander, by calling for mortar and artillery support. A good field of observation also produces a feeling of security and makes it possible to reduce the number of sentries required by day.

3. Light machine-guns should be laid on fixed lines so that they can fire in darkness, smoke, or fog. Tasks will be designed to cover likely approaches, or places such as a gap in a hedge where casualties may be inflicted on hostile patrols.

4. The frontage which can be held by a platoon is limited by the absolute necessity for depth and mutual support between sections, and by the need for control. In enclosed country or built-up areas, platoon frontages may be less than 100 yards, but in open country it may be necessary to hold frontages of up to 300 yards; it must be emphasized that frontages are covered by fire and not by men, although at night or in fog, lack of visibility will mean having more men alert in forward posts.

5. Although the platoon will be sited to repel an attack from the most likely direction, *ie*, from the front, it must be prepared for *all-round defence*, since it must hold its position against enemy who may have broken through the FDLs elsewhere and attack it from the flanks or rear.

6. Bombardment by HE air-bursts from artillery, from mortars, rockets or from the air, will make a certain degree of dispersion essential, particularly before digging has been completed. The centre of one section should rarely be closer than 50 yards to the centre of the next section or to platoon headquarters. Careful attention must be paid to overhead cover.

SECTION 77.—ANTI-TANK DEFENCE

If an anti-tank weapon is allotted to the platoon, it should be sited to deal with any tank approaches not already covered by anti-tank guns, or to engage at close range any tanks which penetrate the long-range anti-tank defences. Since tanks, unlike infantry, can advance under air-burst bombardment, overhead cover is particularly important for platoon anti-tank weapon detachments. The flash of the discharge of the platoon anti-tank weapon may enable the enemy to locate it, after it has fired a few shots, particularly if the light is bad. The crew should therefore construct alternative positions to move to after firing. Anti-tank weapons should be sited to catch enemy tanks in enfilade and not head-on. It is the head-on armour that is generally the thickest and most difficult to penetrate.

SECTION 78.—ALTERNATIVE POSITIONS

1. Alternative positions may have to be dug for either:—

- (a) *Deception*.—In a position which is to be held for some time it is sometimes decided, in order to deceive the enemy's ground and air reconnaissance, to prepare and occupy alternative positions, the main positions being occupied only when an attack seems likely to develop.
- (b) *Secondary tasks*.—Which cannot be covered from the main positions.
- (c) *Occupation at night*.—When a reverse slope position is held, it may be necessary to move the infantry forward during the night to prevent the enemy from establishing himself on the crest in the darkness.

2. The platoon commander should always remember that the digging of alternative positions imposes an additional physical strain on his men and must not be started until the primary fire trenches and obstacles have been completed.

When alternative positions are taken up at night he must be very careful to avoid any movement being seen by the enemy. Bad track discipline will give both positions away. Only one section should move at a time, otherwise there is a risk of the platoon being caught by shell fire when moving into the open. There is also a risk of the enemy infiltrating into unoccupied positions at night or during an attack.

SECTION 79.—LAYOUT OF PLATOON HEADQUARTERS

This is the responsibility of the platoon sergeant, once its position on the ground has been pointed out to him. A trench with overhead cover will be constructed from which, if possible, all section posts and the platoon front can be seen. There should also be space for two visitors. The 88 set will be placed so that it is not screened from company headquarters.

SECTION 80.—PLATOON COMMANDER'S ORDERS AND BRIEFING

1. The platoon commander's orders for the defence should include the following points when the situation allows time for a deliberate defensive position to be taken up.

Information

- (a) *Enemy*.—Where he is, when an attack is expected, and from what direction.

(b) *Own troops*

- (i) The positions of neighbouring localities, and who occupies them.
- (ii) The positions and tasks of supporting anti-tank guns, and of tanks.
- (iii) The ground covered by mortar and artillery DF tasks.
- (iv) Whether any troops are out in front to cover the occupation of the position and give warning of the enemy's approach.
- (v) The patrol policy.

Intention

- (c) *eg*, "The platoon will hold," etc.

Method

- (d) Position and fire tasks of each section.
- (e) Range at which fire is to be opened.
- (f) Position and tasks of 2-inch mortar and platoon anti-tank weapon if allotted.
- (g) Types of section posts to be constructed.
- (h) Orders for concealment of the position.
- (j) Priority of work.
- (k) Plans and orders for immediate counter-attack.

Administration

- (l) Ammunition replenishment.
- (m) Feeding arrangements.

Intercommunication

- (n) Position of platoon and company headquarters.
- (o) Signal for defensive fire.
- (p) Password.
- (q) Instructions on 88 set channel. Wireless silence, etc.
- (r) Any questions.

2. In addition to giving his orders to his section commanders, the platoon commander will if possible brief his whole platoon. This briefing should include a general outline of the defensive plan, including plans for counter-attack, and the policy governing the defence, with the reasons for this policy. The need for aggressive defence should be stressed and it must be explained to the men at what range and targets they should open fire, by day and by night.

SECTION 81.—THE SECTION COMMANDER'S RESPONSIBILITIES. THE LAYOUT OF SECTION POSITIONS AND SECTION ROUTINE

1. After receiving his orders, the section commander will carry out a detailed reconnaissance of his own area. He will select the site for each weapon, with his eye close to the ground, and will decide on the layout of his fire trenches. He should make contact with neighbouring section posts and anti-tank guns so that they know each other's positions, and can ensure that all the enemy approaches are covered by fire. Finally he will mark out his fire trenches on the ground.

His orders will be on the same lines as those of the platoon commander, but modified to meet the requirements of his own section.

2. As soon as the troops arrive on the ground, and before digging starts, they must be given their dispositions and fire tasks so as to be able to deal with any immediate attack by the enemy.

3. When preparing a position while in contact with the enemy, each man must provide himself, as quickly as possible, with some form of cover from behind which he can fire, as soon as his weapon has been sited. It is the platoon sergeant's responsibility to see that shelter is provided at platoon headquarters for the platoon commander and his runner, and that the same is done for men posted as standing patrols or sentries, since none of these men will, at this stage, be able to dig for themselves.

4. The section commander is responsible that :—

- (a) The section weapons are so placed that each man can fire on the ground allotted to him ; the original positions must be selected with the eye close to the ground and the individual man's fire position checked after it has been completed.
- (b) The section is not suddenly surprised by the enemy.
- (c) The section is properly dug in.
- (d) The section is concealed from ground and air observation.
- (e) A proper routine is observed.
- (f) A range card is made.
- (g) The most strict attention is paid to track discipline.

SECTION 82.—CONCEALMENT AND TYPES OF SECTION TRENCHES

1. Types of fire trenches and priority of work are given in Appendix B. It must be remembered when siting and constructing them that concealment is an important factor in defence. Posts seen by the enemy will be knocked out by artillery or tanks before they attack. In an attack against a well-concealed defensive position, the enemy will be surprised and suffer heavy casualties.

2. The following points on the siting and construction of fire trenches should be noted :—

- (a) Trenches will be close enough for the section commander's orders to be heard during the battle.
- (b) Drainage is always difficult, but sumps or channels can be dug according to the slope of the ground.
- (c) Reverse slopes are a great aid to concealment and surprise, provided the field of fire is sufficient.
- (d) With the increasing efficiency of air-burst missiles, head-cover is important, but needs good concealment and sound construction.
- (e) Track discipline is essential to avoid giving away the position to aerial reconnaissance photography.
- (f) When siting positions remember they will probably be occupied for some time.
- (g) In open country, crawl trenches may have to be dug to allow movement between fire trenches. This must be considered during the selection of the positions.

SECTION 83.—ROUTINE

The aim of routine is to prevent surprise by the enemy, to maintain discipline so that concealment and proper use of tracks is kept up and to keep weapons and equipment in good condition.

- (a) Each man's arms must be laid to the right of his task where they can be picked up immediately. Equipment will not be taken off unless there are other troops in front.
- (b) When the section is finding sentries during the digging-in period they should be relieved every 30 minutes ; normally the duty period is one hour.
- (c) Men must be told what to do when the alarm is sounded and (at night) if a flare or very light goes up, *eg.* all go to ground at once, or "freeze."

Routine by day

2. (a) A sentry will be posted. The section commander will personally organize reliefs and check that the correct scale of equipment is being worn—normally a light scale.
- (b) Weapons will be kept in fire trenches, but ready for instant action.
- (c) Times will be fixed for inspection of arms, ammunition, anti-gas equipment (if issued), emergency rations and field dressings.
- (d) Reports of enemy activity, including shelling and mortaring reports, will be sent back to platoon headquarters.
- (e) No man will leave the post without permission.
- (f) Weapon slits will be kept clean and tidy.
- (g) Latrines will be dug and kept fly proof.
- (h) No fires for cooking will be lit.
- (j) As no one in the FDLs gets much sleep at night, section commanders will organize rest periods for the men during the day.

Routine by night

3. (a) Sentries will be posted in pairs and will always cover each other.
- (b) Troops manning FDLs will sleep clothed and equipped for instant action.
- (c) No lights will be shown.
- (d) Rifles and Brens will be in a position to fire; bayonets will be fixed. When men are sleeping the rifle will be placed between the arms and side when lying down, between the knees when sitting.
- (e) Track discipline will be strictly maintained.
- (f) Sentries will be warned about returning patrols.
- (g) Noise in the position must be eliminated.

SECTION 84.—STAND-TO

The half light at dawn and dusk favours the attacker as he can see well enough to advance, whereas aimed small arms fire from the defenders is very difficult unless men are thoroughly alert and their eyes accustomed to the poor light. Sections in forward areas therefore will stand-to in fire positions at these periods from the time the light begins to favour the attacker until full daylight (morning stand-to) and until it is quite dark (evening stand-to). These periods usually last about half an hour in Europe. The times of stand-to and stand-down will be ordered by the platoon commander, who will usually make an inspection of section positions then.

SECTION 85.—SENTRIES

1. The security of the position depends on the alertness and efficiency of the sentries.

2. They must be posted so that they can warn the section silently by day and night, and they must avoid any unnecessary movement. During darkness or fog when double sentries are employed, they should be in touch with one another and able to communicate without movement. The position of reliefs should be so arranged that they can be awakened for their tour of duty without disturbing the rest of the section.

3. Sentries must understand the procedure for dealing with persons approaching the position.

If anyone approaches, the sentry will warn the post.

When a person or party is very close, the section will be ready to fire and the sentry will call "Halt," just loud enough to be heard. If the order to halt is obeyed, the section commander will order one person to advance and give an account of himself, the remainder of the party being covered by the section with their weapons. If the order to halt is disobeyed fire will be opened immediately. The tendency to challenge too early must be resisted, any one approaching must be allowed so close that the section cannot possibly miss them with fire. On very dark nights it is usually better to rely on bayonets.

4. All sentries must know:—

- (a) The direction of the enemy.
- (b) The extent of the ground they have to watch.
- (c) The position of flanking posts.
- (d) The names of landmarks to their front.
- (e) The procedure to be followed if anyone approaches the position.
- (f) Particulars of returning patrols.
- (g) The signal for defensive fire.
- (h) The pass-word.
- (j) The direction of the wind.

SECTION 86.—WIRE AND MINES**Wire**

1. It is important that some form of wire obstacles should be erected in front of the defensive position as soon as possible, provided that concealment of the position is not affected. Where possible, wire should be used to strengthen a natural obstacle such as a hedge, fence or ditch and very effective low wire obstructions about 2 feet 6 inches high and about 15 feet in width can be erected in long grass, heather, etc.

2. In a reverse slope position, wire obstacles will not be visible to enemy observation on the ground, but will show up in an air photograph, so a consideration of all the factors is necessary before deciding to construct them.

It is best to erect the wire concealed if possible from ground and air observation, about 30 yards away from the fire trenches so as to be outside the normal range at which grenades can be thrown. Trip flares can be usefully employed in conjunction with wire obstacles and should be sited in relation to covered approaches to the position.

Mines

3. All infantry should be capable of laying, arming and lifting the anti-tank mine, Mark 5, the 75 grenade, ground anti-personnel mines (as opposed to the type that jumps into the air), and trip wire. They should also be able to mark and fence off minefields.

Officers and NCOs must learn how to record minefields and mark them on the map.

4. It must again be emphasized that the decision to lay mines of any type will normally come from a higher level than the platoon, as indiscriminate mine laying is likely to cause more casualties to our own troops than the enemy.

SECTION 87.—RELIEF IN THE LINE

1. The relief of one unit by another is probably the commonest operation carried out in the line and usually takes place at night. Therefore, to avoid confusion it is essential that there should be a simple procedure known to all ranks and in which they have been thoroughly trained.

2. The company second-in-command and platoon sergeants, with one guide to each platoon, will go forward with the battalion advance party to meet their opposite numbers of the out-going unit in order to collect available information. The out-going unit will usually provide protective patrols during the relief.

3. Points of information required by the platoon are :—

- (a) Complete enemy dispositions, maps, etc.
- (b) Platoon dispositions, including arc and field of fire and positions of platoons on the flanks.
- (c) Enemy habits, patrols, shelling, etc.
- (d) Range cards.
- (e) Runner's routes and communication plan.
- (f) Light signal.
- (g) Night dispositions and alternative tasks.
- (h) Platoon anti-tank weapons and 2-inch mortar tasks.

- (j) Any stores to be handed over, *ie*, ammunition, reserve water and rations, wiring stores and mines.
- (k) Details of supporting arms in the area, *ie*, 3-inch mortar, 17-pounder and 6-pounder anti-tank guns.
- (l) Feeding and sanitary arrangements.
- (m) Fixed lines to be taken over.
- (n) Evacuation of casualties.
- (o) What patrols are out during the relief.

Duties of platoon sergeants

4. The platoon sergeant will normally represent his platoon in the advance party and will act as guide, with one assistant. He will be made responsible for :—

- (a) Deciding whether the digging of any extra weapon pits is necessary before the relief takes place, and if so, getting a digging party up.
- (b) Ensuring that he knows where company headquarters is, if necessary taking compass bearings and pacing the distance from platoon headquarters so that it can be found at night.
- (c) The checking of range cards and panoramas and the making of any extra copies.
- (d) Locating the position of platoon weapons, including 2-inch mortar and platoon anti-tank weapons and the positions of platoons on the flank.
- (e) Obtaining information of the habits of the enemy.

Sequence of relief

5. The sequence of events in the relief is as follows :—

- (a) At the battalion check point.
 - (i) Companies are checked in as they arrive.
 - (ii) Companies will not halt here except very temporarily, and guides will lead companies straight to their company check points—in the case of forward rifle companies.
- (b) At the company check point, the company is met by the platoon representative who leads off platoons to their new area.

The route from the battalion check point through to the company check point is generally lit or marked, the responsibility being that of the outgoing unit. In difficult places, tape will be used and it will often be necessary to mark the way from the new company headquarters to the new platoon headquarters.

The relief must be carried out as silently as possible.

- (c) On arrival of the platoon in the area allotted to it, two runners must be sent immediately to company headquarters, one staying there and the other returning.
- (d) The platoon sergeants will compare notes with platoon commanders before the section are seen into positions, one at a time. Individual soldiers will take over the fire trenches they are going to occupy and will be given all relevant information regarding patrols sent out in front and will stand-to until further orders.
- (e) When sections are in position and all the stores checked, the platoon commander will report the relief complete to company headquarters, and will "stand-down" when ordered by the company commander.

SECTION 88.—SHELLING REPORTS

1. Every man must understand the importance of submitting quick and accurate reports of enemy shelling and mortaring. It is this information which makes it possible for our artillery to locate the enemy guns and mortars, and having located them to neutralize them. All shelling or mortaring which is observed should be reported, whether the shells or bombs are falling in the platoon area or not. When passing shelling over the wireless, the accuracy of the fire must never be mentioned, since it would give the enemy exactly the information he requires, and he will be quick to act on it.

2. When possible, sentries should be provided with a pencil and paper, and with a compass, for the purpose of making notes for shelling. The standard shelling report is in the form of a letter code and is as follows:—

- (A) From (unit).
- (B) Map reference of observer.
- (C) Grid bearing of flash, sound or groove* of shell (state which).
- (D) Time from.
- (E) Time to.
- (F) Map reference of area shelled.
- (G) Number and nature of guns and mortars.
- (H) Nature of fire (registration, bombardment, harassing, etc.).
- (J) (For shelling only). Time from flash to bang.

* The groove is the furrow made in the ground by the impact of the shell.

CHAPTER XII

WITHDRAWAL

SECTION 89.—WHAT THE PLATOON AND SECTION COMMANDER MUST KNOW

Before the withdrawal, the platoon commander of a forward platoon must know:—

- (a) Withdrawal plans of any covering parties, of troops on his flank and of supporting tanks, SP anti-tank guns, etc.
- (b) Who will order his withdrawal.
- (c) The time up to which he must hold his position.
- (d) Whether he can start to thin out before that time.
- (e) Whether there is a line in rear which his platoon must cross by a certain time.
- (f) The route to the company RV. The route chosen must not mask the fire of troops holding a position in rear.
- (g) The positions of troops through whom he is to withdraw.
- (h) The location of the position to which he is to withdraw.

SECTION 90.—ORDERS AND BRIEFING

Both in orders and briefing the following points must be included:

- (a) Full details of withdrawal timings, routes, and positions of other troops in rear.
- (b) A warning against alarmist rumours.
- (c) A warning against leaving anything such as ammunition or old letters on the position, and a reminder that on no account will a soldier's personal arms be abandoned and that to allow any other weapon to fall intact into enemy hands is a disgraceful crime.

SECTION 91.—THE RECONNAISSANCE OF NEW POSITIONS AND WITHDRAWAL ROUTES

1. The new position should whenever possible be reconnoitred before the old one is evacuated. In a platoon, this task usually falls to the platoon sergeant, who goes back for this purpose with the other platoon sergeants of the company, under one of the officers, probably the company second-in-command. The platoon sergeant must take with him one or more guides whose tasks will be to meet the platoon when it arrives and lead it to the position which has been reconnoitred.

2. Platoon and, if possible, section commanders, should reconnoitre and memorize the route back to the company RV, which will probably be situated in the rear of the reserve platoon position.

3. The platoon commander will select a platoon RV at which, when the time comes to withdraw, he will collect his platoon before moving on to the company RV. The platoon RV should be immediately in rear of the platoon position with cover from enemy fire and observation. Section commanders and seconds-in-command must reconnoitre and memorize the route to the platoon RV. If APCs have been allotted the platoon will probably ambush at the company RV.

SECTION 92.—WITHDRAWAL BY NIGHT

When a platoon withdraws from a position at night, the first to leave will normally be the reserve section or sections and platoon headquarters, which will go back to the platoon RV to await the remainder of the platoon. The forward sections or section will then withdraw. Each section should move complete under its section commander. The platoon commander himself will always remain on the position to the last and satisfy himself that everyone is clear before rejoining the platoon and leading it to the company RV.

SECTION 93.—WITHDRAWAL BY DAY

1. If a withdrawal has to take place by day, when troops are in contact with the enemy, it will be usual for the forward sections to pull out first, the reserve section remaining in position to cover their withdrawal. It will probably also be necessary, by day, to thin out sections gradually, the rifle groups going first under the second-in-command and the Bren groups remaining to the last under the section commander.

2. It is likely that the platoon will withdraw covered by the fire of the reserve platoon of the company and of all available supporting arms such as tanks, anti-tank guns and carriers. It may be necessary for the platoon, in its turn, to take up an intermediate position to cover the withdrawal of the reserve platoon. This "leap frogging" process will be repeated until a break-away has been achieved.

SECTION 94.—ACTIVITY IN THE POSITION

In all cases normal activity must be kept up until the last possible moment. The total volume of fire coming from the platoon area must not appear to diminish until it is finally evacuated. On the other hand any marked increase in fire will tend to draw the enemy's attention to what is going on, and thus lessen the chance of making a clean break.

SECTION 95.—DELAYING TACTICS

The rear guard's chief duty of gaining time by delaying the enemy can often be assisted by the employment of simple and hastily constructed dummies. A "minefield" of dust-covered plates or a screen of blankets across a road, are obstacles which the enemy must pause to investigate.

CHAPTER XIII

AMBUSHES AND TANK HUNTING

SECTION 96.—GENERAL

1. An ambush is an operation in which the principles of concealment, surprise and offensive action are used to inflict the maximum casualties, confusion and damage to enemy on the move. It does not envisage the capture and holding of ground permanently. It is the tactics of the guerrilla. Once the aim has been achieved then the ambush party withdraws to avoid useless casualties.

2. Tank hunting is the art of destroying tanks by small parties of infantry with their own weapons. It is often closely allied to the laying of ambushes.

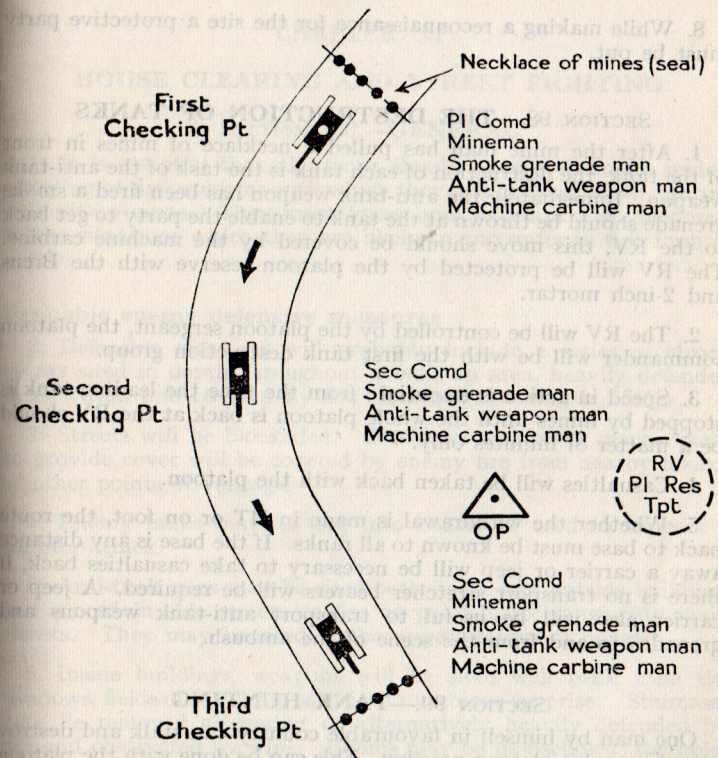


FIG 14.—A tank ambush

SECTION 97.—POINTS TO REMEMBER

1. Thorough reconnaissance and good intelligence of the enemy's habits.
2. Careful selection of a concealed approach to the ambush position and the line of withdrawal from it.
3. A rendezvous for the ambush-party to go to after the action.
4. A reserve should be sited to cover the withdrawal.
5. Do not place men where they may be likely to fire at each other.
6. Post sentries and rest the men while waiting for the enemy.
7. Whenever possible rehearse in detail.
8. While making a reconnaissance for the site a protective party must be out.

SECTION 98.—THE DESTRUCTION OF TANKS

1. After the mine man has pulled a necklace of mines in front of the tank, the destruction of each tank is the task of the anti-tank weapon. Immediately the anti-tank weapon has been fired a smoke grenade should be thrown at the tank to enable the party to get back to the RV, this move should be covered by the machine carbine. The RV will be protected by the platoon reserve with the Brens and 2-inch mortar.

2. The RV will be controlled by the platoon sergeant, the platoon commander will be with the first tank destruction group.

3. Speed in action is essential ; from the time the leading tank is stopped by mines until the whole platoon is back at the RV should be a matter of minutes only.

4. Casualties will be taken back with the platoon.

5. Whether the withdrawal is made in MT or on foot, the route back to base must be known to all ranks. If the base is any distance away a carrier or jeep will be necessary to take casualties back, if there is no transport stretcher bearers will be required. A jeep or carrier also will be useful to transport anti-tank weapons and grenades to and from the scene of the ambush.

SECTION 99.—TANK HUNTING

One man by himself in favourable country can stalk and destroy a tank near his platoon position. This can be done with the platoon anti-tank weapon provided the enemy tank is not protected by

infantry. This is possible because the crew inside a tank only have a very restricted view, especially if they are forced to close down by small arms fire.

Therefore when one or two men stalk a tank they should be given covering fire on the tank itself by the section Bren. It should also be remembered that the armament (both gun and machine guns) of the tank cannot be depressed low enough to hit a crawling man at ranges of less than ten yards, therefore a man with a grenade (with delayed fuze) is fairly safe at this distance. However, a suitable range for the platoon anti-tank weapon when stalking a tank, is about 50 yards, and it should be fired at the rear or sides of the tank. It will be unlikely to penetrate the front armour.

CHAPTER XIV

HOUSE CLEARING AND STREET FIGHTING

SECTION 100.—GENERAL

1. It is essential that all troops should have a thorough understanding of the problems with which they will be faced when fighting in built-up areas. They must know how to adapt their fieldcraft to the situations which they are likely to encounter in this form of battle.

Probable enemy defensive measures

2. Defensive measures will probably include a series of strong points sited in depth throughout a built-up area, heavily defended from within and covered by fire from neighbouring buildings.

3. Streets will be blockaded. Blockades and other places likely to provide cover will be covered by enemy fire from nearby houses or other points of vantage.

4. Enemy tanks may be dug into houses or used to support a counter-attack.

5. Anti-tank guns may be sited both inside and outside buildings and placed in side streets to fire at point-blank range into main streets. They may be sited in the upper storeys of houses.

6. Inside buildings, weapons will be sited well back from the windows, fields of fire being sacrificed to achieve surprise. Staircases may be removed altogether or alternatively heavily defended by fire and obstructed by wire. Rooms may be mouseholed, the holes being hidden by furniture, and barricaded to prevent grenades being thrown into them.

7. Certain points of a town may be comparatively free from the enemy. If a town is completely free from the enemy, beware of booby-traps. Generally speaking heavily defended towns are not booby-trapped as this would be a hindrance to the defenders themselves.

Principles of street fighting

8. *Careful and simple planning.*—It is vital that the planning of an attack against a built-up area shall be carried out in the greatest detail. All possible information must be gleaned from air photographs, maps, street-plans, civilians and other sources. The plan must be simple and every man must know exactly what to do; if not, there will be chaos when a battle has been launched into the streets of a town.

THE ATTACK WILL BE PLANNED IN DEPTH.

Depth will ensure maintenance of the momentum of the attack.

9. *Short bounds.*—In an attack, towns are normally divided into sectors on a one-company basis and are dealt with sector by sector. Platoons and sections are given objectives within these sectors. Objectives must be limited and bounds short. Sometimes only one house at a time will be cleared, a fresh plan being made for each successive bound. Once heavy opposition is met, one platoon must be used for each side of a street. Experience has shown that a section on each side of the street is not sufficient to keep up the momentum of the attack.

10. *Domination of likely killing areas.*—Open spaces, particularly main streets, may be covered by enemy fire; before crossing these, arrangements will always be made for covering fire. No section should move into the open unless a covering group is supporting it. There must be a "leg on the ground".

11. *Thoroughness in house-clearing.*—Houses and out-buildings must be searched throughout, including cellars and roofs. Furniture likely to conceal "mouseholes" must be moved.

12. *Consolidation of every house captured.*—Every house must be consolidated after its capture. All round defensive positions must be taken up and snipers posted on the roof. The house thus becomes a firm base for further advance. Ammunition, especially grenades, must be replaced and casualties dealt with.

13. *Ammunition must be available.*—Dumps will be formed behind the assault troops as they advance, ammunition being delivered by carriers, transport or tanks to company sectors and then carried forward by previously arranged parties.

14. *Equipment should be light.*—Small packs, if worn and used for carrying grenades, should be slung and kept in place by a belt. Leather jerkins and toggle ropes are useful.

Smoke grenades, owing to their toxic effect, are very effective for driving the enemy out of cellars.

15. *Plan for the disposal of casualties.*—Casualties should be left in houses. Stretcher bearers must always follow up assaulting troops and evacuate casualties to pre-arranged collecting posts. All troops should carry shell dressings as well as field dressings.

Supporting Arms

16. The following arms may be used in support of assaulting troops:—

- (a) *Artillery.*—Artillery can be of little direct help to assaulting troops, but is used for "softening up" a sector before attack.
- (b) *3-inch mortars.*—3-inch mortars can be used for neutralizing areas from which the enemy are likely to bring fire onto assaulting troops.
- (c) *Tanks.*—Tanks, if available, are normally employed in small groups; a troop to a company. They should only be called forward to carry out some specific task. They can blast houses, rubble-heaps, and strong points with their guns and use their machine-guns to thicken up infantry fire. Tanks are too "blind" to lead infantry in streets where enemy anti-tank guns are operating. The importance of a system of indicating targets cannot be over-emphasized.
- (d) *Anti-tank guns.*—Apart from their normal use, anti-tank guns can be used for the destruction of houses. They are sited in buildings or in side streets and rubble heaps. Self-propelled guns can be placed in support of assaulting troops and moved up under infantry protection to blast houses and strong points before the assault.
- (e) *Flame throwers.*—The Wasp and the carrier are too vulnerable for use in the forward areas. The Ack Pack and the Crocodile can be used most effectively against houses, pillboxes, rubble-heaps and strong points. Infantry must be ready to mop up as soon as the flame has been thrown.
- (f) *Explosives.*—Pole charges will often be needed and demolitions will be required. Every infantry platoon and section must contain men trained in the handling of explosives, as pioneers and sappers may not always be available.

SECTION 101.—BATTLECRAFT

Clearing a house

1. The organization of the platoon is as follows:—

(a) *Clearing Section*.—The section which makes the initial assault. This is divided into:—

<i>Clearing Group</i>	<i>Covering Group</i>
Section commander.	Bren group.
Bomber.	Any remaining riflemen.
Look-out man.	
Two entry men.	

(b) *Reserve Section(s)*.—The section (or sections) which the platoon commander keeps with him and uses when the clearing section is held up.

Task of covering group

2. The task of the covering group is to cover the clearing group when the latter moves, especially when it moves in the open. The covering group should, therefore, keep as close as possible to the clearing group.

Action of clearing group

3. The two entry men go into the house at any point specified by the platoon commander. They clear the first room and shout "Clear." The section commander, the bomber, and the look-out man enter. The look-out man positions himself so that he can readily act as runner and make contact with the covering group and the platoon commander. The section commander and the bomber now clear adjacent rooms while the entry men guard stairways and passages. As soon as a firm base has been established the covering group is sent for, and the house clearing continues.

Points to note

4. If possible, a house should be entered from the roof. The attacker who assaults from above has the advantage of position and can drive the enemy into the street, which is the "killing ground". Very often, however, it is impracticable to enter a house by the roof. In that case the principle is to clear, first of all, the floor by which entry has been gained, and then to fight upwards or downwards.

IF ENTRY IS EFFECTED ON THE GROUND FLOOR, THE ATTACKERS MUST NEVER ATTEMPT TO RUSH TO THE TOP OF THE HOUSE WITH THE OBJECT OF CLEARING DOWNWARDS. They will never reach the top of the house if the building is well defended. Should there be a cellar in the

house it must be guarded until the ground floor, at least, has been cleared, and preferably the entire house. When the attackers have made quite certain that they cannot be surprised, they can deal with the cellar.

5. If the house is known to be defended, it is unwise to attempt entry by doorways or windows. A breach to provide entry into the house must be blown in the wall, either by tanks, anti-tank guns, or pole charges. If the enemy is suspected of being in any particular room a grenade should be thrown into that room, and the attackers should then dash in to close with him while he is dazed and blinded by the explosion. Another grenade should be ready for use in case the enemy is behind a barricade.

6. Platoon anti-tank weapons and 2-inch mortar HE fired into windows are most effective for "softening" houses before entry.

Use of the battlecraft in street clearing

7. The above battlecraft will be used when clearing a street. Whether opposition is light or heavy the method of movement up a street will be "a ladder movement," one section or platoon working on each side of the street and each clearing the house that comprises its boundary and then reorganizing to shoot the other on to its next objective.

8. Whenever possible, troops attacking a built-up area should avoid any attempt to clear both sides of a main street. It is better to keep to the side streets and the back streets where fewer casualties may be incurred.

9. Killing areas should be selected and made known to the troops. They must be warned not to enter these areas.

A platoon clearing a street**10. Plan.**

No. 1 Section gives covering fire.

No. 2 Section assaults houses on right.

No. 3 Section assaults houses on left.

Platoon headquarters and reserve move forward one or two houses in rear of one or other leading sections. Part of platoon headquarters may assist No. 1 Section in giving covering fire.

Streets or back areas are killing grounds and out of bounds to attackers.

Sequence of Action

11. The following is the sequence of action :—

Serial	No. 1 Section	No. 2 Section	No. 3 Section	Pl HQ and reserve
1	Siting of initial covering fire, and forming up assault sections.			
2	Covering fire	Clearing group assaults and clears House 1.	Covering fire.	Covering fire and general direction of attack.
3	Covering fire.	Covering group follow up clearing group as soon as latter have entered house successfully.	Covering fire.	Covering fire and general direction of attack.
4	Covering fire	Section commander posts section to fire across on to House 1, and signals to No. 3 Section as soon as this covering fire is posted.	Covering fire.	Covering fire and general direction of attack.
5	Covering fire.	Covering fire.	Clearing group assaults and clears House 2.	Covering fire and general direction of attack.
6	Covering fire.	Covering fire.	Covering group follow up clearing group as soon as latter have entered successfully.	Covering fire and general direction of attack.
7	Covering fire.	Covering fire.	Section commander posts section to fire across House 3, and signals to No. 2 Section as soon as covering fire is posted.	
8	Section moves forward as required to cover further advance of Nos. 2 and 3 Sections.	Nos. 2 and 3 Sections work alternately as above until moment when covering fire from No. 1 Section is required further forward. Nos. 2 and 3 Sections can either continue simultaneously with forward move of No. 1 Section or cover its move until No. 1 Section is in position.		Follow rear of either Nos 2 or 3 sections when latter have reached (approx) House 5 or 6.

General Notes

12. The above is a guide only and may require variation and elaboration to suit circumstances. For example, in "Sequence of Events" serial 3, the covering group of No. 2 Section may be ordered to stay outside to cover either its own clearing group or No. 1 Section on to the next house, or to fire on any enemy who may try to escape from the house during the entry of the clearing group. Such methods will either require decision in the initial orders, or will be left to the initiative of the covering group commander.

13. At serial 8 the platoon commander may reverse the roles of No. 1 Section and one of the leading sections.

14. If one of the leading sections is held up, the other section must continue the forward movement until the objective is reached.

15. A platoon reserve, however small, will be useful in order that the platoon commander can have a force under his immediate control. It may consist of platoon HQ personnel only or may be supplemented by one or two men withdrawn from rifle sections.

Clearing a small village

16. A single platoon may be given the task of clearing a small hamlet or group of farm buildings with a single street through it. A battlecraft which can be applied to both tasks is similar to that of a platoon clearing a street with the following variations :—

- Ambush party.*—A few men under a NCO, preferably the platoon sergeant, should be detailed to go well to the rear of the village and take up a position on the enemy's main line of retreat. They must be in position before clearing begins. This party must not be seen and be well clear of the buildings since once the enemy realizes that he is trapped, he will fight all the harder in his positions.
- Fire section.*—The fire section will cover the main street. The platoon may have to fight to get the fire section into position and clearing must not start until the fire section is in its correct place. If necessary the fire section should advance by fire and movement to cover the clearing sections as they move through the village.
- Clearing sections.*—The clearing sections clear from the rear of the houses, the aim being to drive the enemy into the killing ground of the street. Houses that can only be entered from the street should be cleared by the fire section as it advances.
- Signals.*—The platoon commander must give a pre-arranged signal to indicate that the village is clear and that it is safe for his own men to come out into the street.

(e) *Platoon headquarters*.—The platoon commander should locate platoon headquarters in the area of the fire section with the task of protecting the rear of the fire section and providing re-inforcements whilst he himself should find a good OP from where he can “read the battle” and send re-inforcements where they are most needed. He should co-ordinate the clearing and not remain permanently with one section.

17. The following general points should be noted :—

- (a) Civilians left in a village in friendly territory will usually go to ground in cellars and only prove an embarrassment when the fighting is over. Hostile civilians will be shot if carrying arms and otherwise treated as surrendered enemy.
- (b) Although all available grenades must be given to the clearing groups, men must not become too “grenade minded.” If they throw a grenade into every room they will soon exhaust their supply and will have none when they are most needed. This is a matter of battle discipline.
- (c) Church towers may be used as an enemy OP. Churches must be cleared.
- (d) Smoke from the 2-inch mortar may help in approaching some buildings. It should be used with care, however, as it may help the enemy to escape. The HE bomb of the 2-inch mortar can be fired direct at short range into any large open windows.

SECTION 102.—PLATOON IN THE DEFENCE IN A BUILT-UP AREA

Platoon Lay-out

1. Although the decision whether or not to take up a defensive position in a building, and if so which building to occupy, will not normally rest with the platoon commander, it is nevertheless one which he may sometimes have to make and he should understand the factors which must be considered.

The platoon commander will have a definite task to perform and this must of course be his first consideration. Fields of fire must be adequate and it may be necessary to reject an otherwise suitable building because the enemy can get close to it under cover.

2. Generally speaking, built-up areas can stand up to a heavy bombardment from artillery and from the air, provided that the buildings are reasonably strong and not too inflammable. The most durable buildings are those of steel and concrete; the next best are stone buildings. Slum dwellings and modern jerry-built houses should be avoided.

3. The building or buildings selected should be inconspicuous and, if possible, should have approaches out of view of the enemy.

Siting of weapons

4. When firing from inside any building it is advisable for Bren gunners and riflemen, particularly those detailed for sniping tasks, to have alternative fire positions. The fighting will be at short ranges, and once the firer is spotted he can be easily neutralized, but if he moves his position occasionally he will be difficult to locate.

Preparation of buildings for defence

5. In the defence of a building, the main position will be on the ground floor with some riflemen and light machine guns on the roof and firing through upper windows.

The following points should be considered :—

- (a) Strengthen the ground floor with timber and sandbags and shore up the ceiling in case it collapses.
- (b) Sandbag windows and make loopholes.
- (c) Block windows and doors and stairways not used by the defenders with wire.
- (d) Remove inflammable material and fill the bath and available receptacles with water. Remove the glass from windows.
- (e) Turn off gas and electricity at the main.
- (f) Make holes (“mouseholes”) in walls and ceilings so that the defence can move from room to room if the enemy get into the house.

Conduct of the defence

6. The small arms fire plan will rely on surprise rather than long fields of fire even more than in defence in normal country. Defence against tanks must always be considered.

- (a) The platoon anti-tank weapon should be placed so as to fire from the flank of the most likely tank approach.
- (b) Sentries will usually see more if posted outside in a concealed position. They should also be able to see signals from platoon headquarters.
- (c) Alternative positions, if necessary reached through “mouseholes,” must be arranged. Sewers can sometimes be used for moving to another house or area.
- (d) Barricades and obstacles must be covered by fire.
- (e) Cellars make a good headquarters and regimental aid posts.
- (f) There should be a covered approach for the delivery of ammunition and supplies and for the evacuation of casualties.

APPENDIX A

SECURITY OF CORRESPONDENCE

Regulations for the contents of correspondence

1. Allusions to any of the following matters are forbidden at all times in private correspondence during a war, whether relating to naval, military or air forces, or operations.

- (a) The strength, efficiency, morale or organization of our forces, including any comment on the absence or presence in the theatre of war of a unit or formation to which any unit is attached or belongs.
- (b) Location or movement of any naval, military or air force units or detachments; arrival or lack of reinforcements.
- (c) Armament or equipment of any kind.
- (d) Distinguishing signs used for the identification of formations, units, and their transport.
- (e) Plans and forecasts or orders for future operations, whether known or merely rumoured or surmized.
- (f) Communications—such as the use, condition, or probable extension of roads, railways, or other transportation facilities, bridging operations, etc.
- (g) State of the maintenance services, including any reference to reserves.
- (h) Position or description of billets, bivouacs or camps.
- (j) Casualties before official publication.
- (k) Effect of any action by the enemy. Any remark which might tend, if published, to encourage the enemy, to cause despondency in our own forces or people, or to incite a feeling of hostility among the people in the theatre of war or in neutral countries.
- (l) Criticisms and statements calculated to bring into disrepute our forces or those of our allies.

2. Private correspondence in the field will be in plain language. Codes, ciphers and shorthand will not be permitted. Picture postcards will be suppressed by franking officers if they may in any way disclose the writer's present or past location, or the route by which movements of the writer's unit have taken place. It is not permitted either in the address or text of correspondence to connect the name of a place with that of a unit, or the name of a unit with the designation of an army post office.

3. It is forbidden to send, or to attempt to send, to unauthorized persons :—

- (a) Official documents, including intelligence summaries, orders, reports, maps, etc., or to disclose their contents except in the course of duty.
- (b) Any document captured from the enemy, or found in places occupied by the enemy, and any document containing information about the enemy.
- (c) Any official document belonging to the civil authorities in allied or enemy territory.

4. It is forbidden to despatch photographs or pictorial matter of any kind, from whatever source they may have been obtained, to neutral or enemy countries.

5. It is forbidden to communicate to the Press except through the duly authorized channel.

6. It is forbidden to send through the post photographs or films except those taken under proper authority.

7. It is forbidden to insert advertisements or letters in any publication inviting correspondence with strangers, or to enter into correspondence with any stranger in response to such advertisements or invitations.

The greatest caution and reserve are necessary in acknowledging presents from unknown donors, or in replying to trade circulars from unknown merchants and dealers. Replies to circulars from neutral countries are forbidden.

8. It is forbidden to make use of the civil postal service in a theatre of operations, or to transmit correspondence by the hand of an officer, soldier, or civilian proceeding outside the theatre of operations, except by a recognized military messenger service.

Field service postcards

9. The field service postcard will not as a rule be delayed in transit by the censor staff, provided that :—

- (a) In the case of Army Form A 2042, nothing has been added except the address, name of sender, and date of despatch, and of the last communication received, and lines erasing sentences not required.
- (b) In the case of Army Form A 2042A, B or C, they have been used only for the purpose for which they are issued.

The copyright of the field service postcard is vested in the Crown; the use of any imitation of it is an infringement of the copyright.

The green envelope

10. The green envelope (Army Form A 3078) is issued to the troops for the transmission of letters relating to private and family matters only. The green envelope will be posted by the sender's unit without franking, but its contents are liable to censorship at the base. The scale of issue of the green envelopes will be determined by the C-in-C. Their provision will be regarded as a privilege liable to be withdrawn at any time. The existence of these envelopes will not be used as a means to absolve officers from the duties of regimental censorship, or to induce or compel men to send all their letters by them. Any misuse of the envelope or infraction of the regulations for its use will be regarded as a serious offence.

The green envelope will be used subject to the following regulations:—

- (a) The certificate regarding its contents, printed on the face of the envelope, must be signed by the sender.
- (b) Green envelopes cannot be registered and should not be used for the transmission of money or valuables.
- (c) Writers may enclose up to three of their own letters in ordinary covers in one green envelope. When used for more than one letter the green envelope will be addressed to the deputy chief censor. The covers of the enclosed letters will be left open by the sender.

The copyright of the green envelope is vested in the Crown; the use of any imitation of it is an infringement of the copyright.

11. Special arrangements will be made for the censorship of letters in foreign languages, which, when they cannot be censored in the writer's unit, will be sent under cover to the deputy chief censor.

Addresses

12. The correct postal address of his unit will be made known to every soldier. No addition to this address will be permitted. In case of doubt regarding the correct military postal address of any unit the local army postal authorities should be consulted. The use of a civil address is forbidden.

13. Writer's addresses may not be given on postcards, nor is the use of stationery permitted which is headed, embossed, or printed with any matter calculated to disclose the location of the writer or of any unit.

14. The rules given above for the addresses and subject-matter of correspondence will be applied equally to packages and parcels, whether sent by post or by other agencies. In all cases where such packages are sent otherwise than by the postal service they will be addressed "c/o The Military Forwarding Officer," but in all other respects the addresses will conform to the regulations for postal correspondence.

RESTRICTED